

RZA PYLON OF MONTREAL PEGGY NOLAND THE FAINT JAY REATARD

XLR8R

120
SEPTEMBER
2008

ACCELERATING MUSIC & CULTURE
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DAEDELUS

THE DOUBLE LIFE OF ALFRED DARLINGTON,
THE DANDY OF THE GLITCH DANCE UNDERWORLD.



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Amy Gunther, Nicole Lemoine, Pase Rock, Beth Riesgraf, Anine Bing & The Lady Tigra in "A Superlative Day". See the whole photo series in the palm / pocket sized WeSC winter catalogue 2008.

www.wesc.com

WeSC
A Superlative Day
2008 / 2009



photo: Willem Stogdard



DAEDELUS, PHOTOGRAPHED IN L.A. BY YE RIN MOK

Issue No 120

ROD MODELL	14
ELLEN ALIEN	16
KAIL	20
A DAY WITH PEGGY NOLAND	24
NOISIA	26
DUSK & BLACKDOWN	30
TREASURE DON	36
DAEDELUS	42
ATHENS FREAK BEAT	52
RZA	60
JAY REATARD	66
NEW ORLEANS SISSY BOUNCE	72
STYLE: NEXT WORLD	80
MUSIC REVIEWS	89
MUSIC COLUMNS	98
IN THE STUDIO: THE FAINT	110
ARTIST TIPS: PHILIP JECK	112
COMPONENTS	114
VIS-ED: ANDREW JEFFREY WRIGHT	122
TBC: THE HANDMADE'S TALE	128



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Ed's Rant: Style Council



Memphis punk Jay Reatard hunts for a bargain. Photo Andy Eisberg

In past years, the annual Style Issue was easier to conceptualize. We always had spreads of the most cutting-edge t-shirt graphics, some product pages of our favorite new stuff, a photo of a stylish artist on the cover. The latest streetwear and designer toys used to excite us, with brands like Perks and Mini and Syndrome and Schwipe coming up with cool graphics, and Kid Robot sending our cute receptors into overdrive. Now the market's been flooded and our interest in fast fashion has waned; plus blatant money-blowing—that \$300 sneaker, the hoodie that will look dated after one season—seems more ridiculous than ever.

Maybe what we're craving is a return to fashion with meaning, to a time when wearing The Misfits logo meant you were really into The Misfits; when a messenger bag and a rolled up pant-leg meant you delivered packages on your bike for a living. Or maybe we need to ditch the word "fashion" altogether and concentrate instead style.

As I sat around in my Muppet bedsheet toga and pondered these questions, it seemed more interesting to cover timelessly stylish people rather than ephemeral fashion trends. So we started with our cover star Daedelus, who has added a profound dimension to electronic music since the late '90s. Mainly, we were dying to know more about the relationship between his forward-thinking sounds and his Victorian styling. What we got was a conceptual *tour de force* of an interview, not to mention a detailed foray into Dandyville.

In another dispatch from L.A., famed curator Aaron Rose details his style icons through the ages (for more of how he arrived at his signature look, check our issue extras section at XLR8R.com). Philly friends Andrew Jeffrey Wright and Adam Wallacavage dispel the notion of a shared Space 1026 aesthetic, displaying two very different styles: one truly comic and lo-fi, the other sharply focused and high-gloss. The connection? Both deeply believe in teaching themselves how to make anything, from t-shirts to Furby sculptures, skate ramps to \$6,000 chandeliers.

A shared style also emerges out of scenes, so we dispatched writers to all points, especially down South. Tony Ware tracked down numerous Athens, Georgia icons and emerged with a first-hand account of the city's iconoclastic music scene from post-punk to the present day. Ports Bishop and Andy "Dre Skull" Hershey traveled to the heart of New Orleans to show us what's up with the homegrown sissy rap scene. Closer to our actual home, Bay Area-based stylist Liz Baca worked with the creative team at the Official Tourist brand to create a fashion spread themed around the borderless world tourists of the near future.

Sure there's still some product shots and fashion tips (see A Day in the Life of Peggy Noland to find out what to wear in Kansas City this season)... hey, we didn't say we were cured of our love for clothes quite yet. But hopefully this issue shows that looking sharp isn't a money thing—a signature style is everyone's for the taking.

- Vivian Host, Editor

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Daedelus photographed in L.A. by Ye Rin Mok.

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Designed for XLR8R by Yego for 21 MC.



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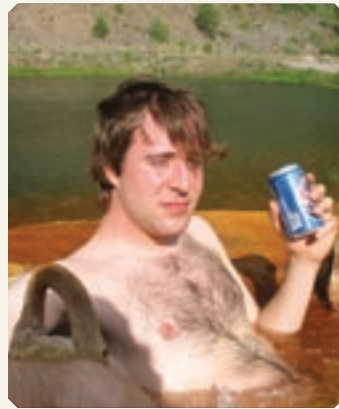
Suzy Poling

Whether touring around with her experimental sound suit, Pod Blotz, or joining forces with Official Tourist on this month's fashion spread, Oakland-based photographer Suzy Poling combines it all aurally and visually, including recently building a spectroscope sound sculpture with Official Tourist's Kamau Patton. Poling has shot for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Connaissance des Arts*, *Chicago Magazine*, *Jane*, *Time Out Chicago*, *Mojo*, and *Seventeen*.
suzyolingphoto.com



Ye Rin Mok

While preparing to photograph Daedelus and his lovely wife, Laura, for this issue, Ye Rin Mok realized that it had already been two years since she photographed the couple for their wedding. Since then she's been busy shooting for magazines such as *Monocle*, *Spin*, *Nylon*, and *Theme*. When she's not photographing, she occupies her time by going to Bikram yoga early in the morning and eating noodles at midnight.
yerinmok.com



Andy Eisberg

Photographer Andy Eisberg dropped out of a preschool recorder recital, medical school, and PhD studies in malaria biochemistry despite trying really hard to be into all three. He's now living his childhood dream of photographing interesting people. Other than dropping out of New York City now and then, he has no other major drop-outs planned. He hopes to become rich and famous someday but will settle for things just how they are now. He shot Jay Reatard and Treasure Don for this issue.
andyeisberg.com



Official Tourist

Official Tourist is an art think tank of visual and cosmic masters who reconstruct the boundaries of color, architecture, sound, and consciousness, and use innovation and insanity as devices to chart and topple new worlds. Spearheaded by Jeremiah Nadya and Jasko Begovic, the group has expanded to incorporate similar minds, including Matt Scullin and Kamau Amu Patton. Official Tourist members worked their Photoshop magic for this issue's style spread.
isthatot.com

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CORRECTIONS: In issue #119's High Places Audiofile, the author was misidentified as Michael Byrne. Joe Colly was the actual author of the piece. In that same issue's feature on Indian Jewelry, band members Brandon David and Rodney Rodriguez were misspelled. *XLR8R* regrets the errors.

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BOURBON DRINKERS:

GIVE THEM 30 SECONDS

SUBJ. NO. 001



Photos: Mark Murrmann — TheStuffInside.com/mark

A hip-hop band staying true to their positive vision even if it costs them a contract. A tattoo artist breaking boundaries away from the spotlight. That's the stuff inside. We posted music, videos and ways to get involved to help them succeed. We're championing the stuff inside wherever we find it. Join us. TheStuffInside.com



HERE'S TO THE STUFF INSIDE

What's new at XLR8R.com

Exclusive music, videos, news, and extras from your favorite artists uploaded daily.

XLR8R TV



ELIOT LIPP SOMETIMES GOES OUTSIDE

Brooklyn-based electro-hip-hop specialist Eliot Lipp has lots of reasons to stay inside: his amazing collection of analog gear, for one. In this episode, we pry him out of his studio and get him to talk about his new album, *The Outside*, as well as indulge in bottom-of-the-barrel crate-digging and ice cream—but not without a good, old-fashioned in-studio synth nerd-out first.

XLR8R.COM/TV/70

Catch new episodes of *XLR8R TV* every Tuesday, including upcoming shows featuring East Coast art collective dearraindrop and cover star Daedelus at home in Los Angeles.

NEW CONTENT EVERY DAY AT XLR8R.COM

Check out music news and features, free MP3 downloads, and reviews updated every day, plus photo blogs, music videos, free PDF versions of XLR8R, and a whole lot more at XLR8R.com.

Podcast

ZIZEK URBAN BEATS CLUB

Argentina's Zizek collective has spent the last few years spreading the gospel of *cumbia*, electro-*reggaeton*, and mash-ups to all corners of the globe via its energy-fueled club nights, and now the crew brings the beats of South America to your headphones. Ringleader Villa Diamante assembled an exclusive XLR8R Podcast with tracks from production duo Fauna, micro-sampler extraordinaire El Remolón, and Argentina-based DJ Joven, for an hour's worth of grime, funk, hip-hop, ragga, and, of course, *cumbia*.



For a lethal dose of XLR8R's favorite tunes, sign up for our weekly podcast at XLR8R.com, where we feature exclusive mixes from all across the spectrum. Next up: London dubsteppers Dusk & Blackdown.

XLR8R.COM/PODCAST



June/July Issue No. 118

Video clips from Lexie Mountain Boys' live shows

Artwork from Subtle's *ExitingARM*

Immortal Technique's favorite books

Interview excerpts with Vis-Ed artist Damien Correll

Hercules and Love Affair MP3 downloads

XLR8R.COM/118EXTRAS



LOOK FOR THE XLR8R.COM EXTRAS ICON

This issue is filled with online extras, including extended interviews, photo outtakes, audio clips, and videos. See them at XLR8R.COM/120EXTRAS



August Issue No. 119

Interview excerpts with Flying Lotus, Steinski, The Black Ghosts, and Superblast

Kid Koala's video tour of his favorite Montreal haunts

XLR8R TV's report from the ninth annual MUTEK Festival

Clips from train-hopping doc *Train on the Brain*

An exclusive wallpaper from Bang Gang 12-inches

XLR8R.COM/119EXTRAS

XLR8R's "Did It All for the Nooka" Contest

Win a **Nooka watch** and a **Daedelus prize pack**.

You don't need to wait around for our once-a-year Style Issue to find XLR8R packed with panache—our readers know that in any given month, you can turn to our pages for the hottest in trend-setting gear. Years back we featured some of designer Matthew Waldman's first Nooka watches, and the timepieces have only gotten slicker and sicker over the years. Lucky for you, this month Nooka is passing along their amazing Zoo AI watch to three readers. In addition, our good friends at Ninja Tune are

tossing in copies of stylish cover star Daedelus' new *Love To Make Music To* album on CD and vinyl.

All you've got to do to win is tell us what Daedelus' real name is. From the correctly answered entries, three winners will be chosen at random.

Three winners will receive: One Nooka Zoo AI watch (in either black, orange, or blue) and a copy of Daedelus' *Love To Make Music To* on vinyl and CD.

Entries will be accepted via standard mail and email. Entries must be received by September 23, 2008. Send your entry to: XLR8R's Did It All for the Nooka Contest, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117 or email contest@xlr8r.com with "XLR8R's Did It All for the Nooka Contest" in the subject line.

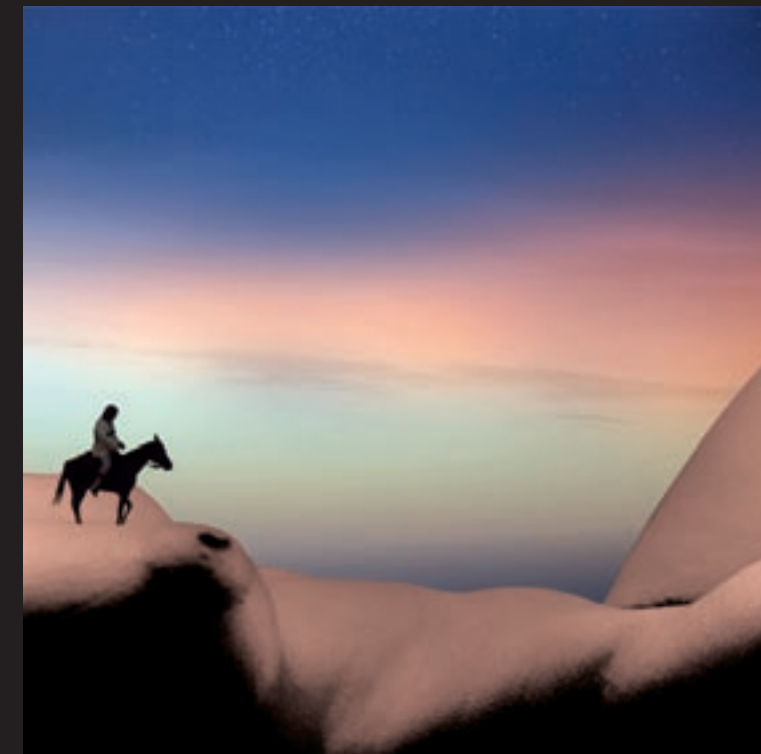


nooka.com, ninjatune.net **NOOKA!**



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In honor of Tellier's latest release, pick up a limited edition *SexualIT* or *SexualITank* while supplies last. Listen to Sebastien on Viva Radio www.viva-radio.com.

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BJ "Bitter" Bastard's Worst Style Trends

To deaf ears, BJ sounds off on the most atrocious things to wear (or attend) this fall.



2



4



9



8

1. Weight-loss sneakers

Why run, now that there are shoes that make you lose weight just by walking in them? There are so many: Fit Flops, Kangoo Jumps, and the clown-like MBTs—whose name, ironically, stands for Masai Barefoot Technology—but you really haven't lived until you've seen a very overweight person teetering on Z-Coil's spring-loaded high-heels.



2. Native American everything

Feathered earrings and hair clips make me think of an impoverished Thai laborer chasing peacocks and quails around a tiny pen. Or maybe they just pick up the bird and pluck that shit? Grody. On that note, these Native American fashions are going too far. Feathers, moccasins, beaded bracelets, and a tribal print top? Take a chill, Pocahontas.

3. Bluetooth headsets

We realize that Bluetooth headsets are a necessary evil, but that doesn't mean you have to start coordinating them to your outfit (although the temptation might be great if you're one of those people who never takes yours out of your ear). The Swarovski crystal-encrusted model was a no-brainer, but we saw a lady the other day with a wicker headset. Oh no you diiiiint, grrrrr.



4. Mask hysteria

Something's in the water in blogtown, since all the electro-house dudes think it's kooky to wear masks when they DJ. Toxic Avenger looks like a scary mime, and Bloody Beetroots wear barely breathable Spiderman-inspired face socks. "MASKTRKRFT" are a late entry to the game with gold Jason-like hockey masks, except the mystique doesn't work because everyone already knows what they look like.

5. Anja Hindmarch totes and their knockoffs

Newsflash: You are not "eco" if you paid \$200 on eBay for an Anja Hindmarch "This is Not a Plastic Bag" tote that originally cost £5. Second newsflash: Any reusable bag will do. You are just going to the fucking grocery store.



6. Hosted parties

This phenomenon is getting out of control, especially when there are more people "hosting" a party than actually DJing. If there are more than five hosts or 10 logos on a flyer, you're pretty much guaranteed that no one is going to dance and everyone is going to think they're cooler than you. If you need to see a list of who is going to be in the VIP area before you decide whether to go to the club, then you are a loser.



7. Koffe Cake "Straight Outta Compton" tee

Clearly someone is trying to start another riot in L.A.

8. Return of grunge

Remember when everyone looked like a dirty bum, to the chagrin of parents nationwide? Yeah, it was fun, and flannel never goes out of style. But all that wool and combat boots was sweaty, and only models and junkies ever pulled off that baby-doll-dress-and-Docs thing without looking like a used Kleenex.

9. Dressing like cereal

Logo tees usually mean you have something to say, like "I like this band" or "this is my political ethos," or even "I got this free from my auto body shop." I guess wearing a Honey Smacks tee or Fruit Loops jeans says, "my primary interest in life is getting stoned and eating cereal."

10. Dressing like a toddler

Guys, we already know you are big babies who are looking for your mommies. You don't have to advertise it by wearing multiple primary colors at once and clothes with baby-toy graphics.



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Rod Modell

The spirit behind Deepchord and Echospace delivers dub-techno for 4 a.m. strolls.

Rod Modell's intoxicating fusion of natural and electronic sounds can be traced back to one moment at a coffeehouse in Detroit more than a decade ago. "I don't really know what the hell happened that night," says the dub-techno maven of the gig (performed as Waveform Transmission). What he does remember is this: It was around 10:30 p.m. inside the century-old Victorian that at the time housed Zoot's Coffeehouse. Candles lit the room and the doors and windows were left wide open so that the

sounds of thunder, rainfall, and car tires brushing across water could bleed in. Coaxing a drone out of an analog synthesizer, his ear caught ambient sounds as they blended into the scene, sonically and spiritually. The audience appeared to be passed out. "I think that these people were freaked out," he says emphatically.

Those spirits drift through Modell's myriad projects: Echospace's dub-laced trips into the dead of winter; Deepchord's Detroit techno-blooded grooves; his solo work built from field recordings in urban and rural Michigan, resulting in tracks

like "Aloeswood" (the opener of his recent *Incense & Black Light* disc), which indistinguishably blends thunderous dub rimshots and actual thunder.

"I look for sounds that basically throw you off a little bit," Modell says of his nighttime sound-hunting. In one experiment, he kept his tape machine at the ready to record lone cars passing his home in Port Huron, Michigan, about an hour Northeast of Detroit. "I could hear [the car sounds] disintegrating for 25 minutes," he says. A similar approach informs Echospace, Modell's partnership with Chicagoan Steven Hitchell,

which garnered critical attention last year with the album *The Coldest Season*. Gusts of raw static and rain-like patter saturate the record's ambient-dub excursions. "It's about finding those magical, little grains of sound," says Modell.

Modell isn't divorced from the dancefloor—he's mastered scores of house and techno records, and club ambiance influences his recordings. For instance, Modell and Deepchord collaborator Mike Schommer were mesmerized by DJs who played nothing but the opening bassline and kickdrum of a track. "They just had three things

going on and it was beautiful," Modell recalls. In response, Deepchord's dub-techno stealthily peels away melody, leaving a bare chassis of beats to ghost-ride down Woodward Avenue. *Vantage Isle Sessions*, which collects remixes of a 2002 Detroit Electronic Music Festival performance, finds the duo swerving through empty, neon-smeared streets, and recalls Berlin's Chain Reaction label, minus the anemic minimalism.

Despite his dance grooves, Modell has a distaste for "musical" things. He's not thrilled by the way *The Coldest Season's* "Empyrean," which struts

to a reggae-spiced rhythm, resembles a *song*. He considers rhythm to be a mere metronome for his work. "The rhythm is incidental—it's the worst part of the song really," he says. "Unfortunately, everybody likes the rhythm." Then again, this comes from a man who's fond of driving around to the sounds of schmaltz god Engelbert Humperdinck. "I wish I could call myself a music-hater," he laments, "but I really can't."

Über Allien

Fallopian and galactic
fashions from Berlin
techno queen **Ellen Allien**.



Photos: Michael Mann (PLUS) and Lisa Wasserman (SOOL). PLUS & SOOL t-shirts modeled by Bpitch Control artists Apparat, Ellen Allien, and Thomas Muller.

As much as there is a Berlin techno sound, there is a Berlin techno look: clothing is cut comfortably but cleverly, lines are clean, colors muted and minimal. It's not flashy or fraught—it's fashion designed to take you from a luxury hotel to the apocalypse in style. And perhaps no one sports this look better than **Ellen Allien**, DJ/producer, Bpitch Control label head, and, in the last few years, fashion designer.

Allien's current collections aren't

fanciful affairs. SOOL is a t-shirt series that borrows its graphic (a galaxy-like maelstrom of different-sized dots, designed by Pfadfinderei) and title from her recent album of the same name. We're still not sure if SOOL stands for "Shit Out of Luck" or "Simple Object Oriented Language" (we're guessing the latter), but we could definitely use a gunmetal-grey SOOL tote bag to carry our club scarf collection around in.

While SOOL price points fall around 30 Euros, Allien's high-end line, PLUS, matches incomes of more Hawtin-like proportions. T-shirts and mini-dresses printed on thin jersey cotton go from somber (the Kreis shirt with its simple black line on grey) to playful—like the genre's newest statement tee, "I'm Techno and You're Not." Most of the line features organic shapes frolicking on white cotton—some simple triangles and circles, others suggesting Miró

paintings or fallopian tubes and eggs at play. (Allien says they "represent the human body's energy flux.") And yes, these are the sort of clothes that look better on organically fed and party-emaciated bodies, but if you like your fashion like you like your techno—minimal and striking—then pony up. *Allura Dannon*

fashion.ellenallien.de, bpitchcontrol.com

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Men With Hats

Beautiful Losers mastermind **Aaron Rose** picks his style icons through the ages.



Aaron Rose's resume reads like a primer of how to merge underground with above-ground tastefully: He's a curator (of now-defunct NYC gallery *Alleged*, the traveling *Beautiful Losers* exhibit, and a Nike/UNDFTD billboard in L.A.), a writer (he edits *ANP Quarterly*), and a guitarist/vocalist (for The Sads), not to mention a tireless supporter of emergent subcultures. Rose, 39, didn't become a style arbiter overnight—he's always been

one. Growing up in the ranch-filled L.A. suburb of Calabasas, he was obsessed with Vivienne Westwood and *The Face* magazine. At age 15, he wore three-button mod suits—ordered from London's Carnaby Street—to school every day (and got baloney sandwiches thrown at him). A few years later, he evolved a signature look—pork-pie hat, Dickies, plaid shirt—that's carried him stylishly through the decades.

"My look grew out of a fusion between my mod stuff and a kind of cholo-punk thing that was going on in L.A.," explains Rose on the phone from Silver Lake. "People always say I dress like an old man, but there's elements of my style that definitely make it contemporary. I mean, there's nights where I'm at The Smell when I look around and everybody is in painted-on jeans and pajama-print hoodies that I go, 'What is up?!' At

the same time I don't feel out of place there, because I feel like the way I dress is part of a long legacy of outsiders. My [clothes] don't really define my outsider status, it's more like an attitude." On the occasion of the release of the inspirational *Beautiful Losers* documentary, we asked Rose to break down the components of his style. *Vivian Host*

Terry Hall of The Specials
The Specials were a two-tone ska band from England. Terry Hall only wore black and white. He wore black suits with skinny ties and high-water pants with white socks and big, clunky old-man shoes. He had a flat top and suspenders. He was an amazing dancer, a great singer, a great frontman. For my 14th or 15th birthday, my mom got me a checkerboard cake that said "Happy Birthday Terry" on it. That's, like, how into this dude I was.

Tom Waits
He had a cool look. He still does. At that time, I was into that beatnik, kind of dirty suit thing. I had just discovered him and was just totally blown away by the music he made and his whole persona and the way he performed. [His music] was very Americana-based but with such a weird edge to it all. I just liked his whole trip. I liked the fact that he was a junkie who lived in a motel. He wasn't some rock star guy. He was down and dirty and hanging out with homeless people.

Perry Farrell
This is so embarrassing but I got really into Jane's Addiction. I don't think I ever tried to dress like [Perry Farrell] but I admired his style and the whole thing that Jane's was, which was druggie, magical, 'fuck authority.' My favorite Jane's song is "Classic Girl."

William S. Burroughs
This is a really hard one because I think I stopped having dressing idols by this point. I was pretty much set into who I am and stopped really looking at it like, "Oh, that guy looks cool, I'm gonna dress like him." I've always had pictures of Burroughs around, but especially during this time. [The junkie thing] is a total myth. A lot of kids died behind that guy... and adults, but he still looks cool.

For more of our exclusive chat with Aaron Rose, visit XLR8R.com/120extras.



Kail

Bravado and beats spew forth from Project Blowed's next L.A. luminary.

MC/producer Kail claims to be on some straight "nigga shit." But despite what the next-gen Project Blowedian may say, he's just as nerdy as he is street. His full-length debut, *True Hollywood Squares*, is full of witty humor, battle bravado, and whimsical production. If it were anything short of classic, he wouldn't have gotten Alpha Pup label head Daddy Kev's support. Impressed with Kail's self-released *The William Thedford Invitational*, Kev met with Kail and the two decided to do it bigger. Instead of pushing *Squares* hand-to-hand like he originally planned, Kail is now moving units worldwide.

"Kev is now responsible for spreading 47 percent more drunken nigga shit all throughout the world.

And that's the motive," says the 25-year-old Los Angeles-based rapper.

Squares, a concept album built around his Tinseltown character rap, not only shows the not-so-glittery side of Hollywood but serves as Kail's proper intro to the world. Kail handles the bulk of the beats on this album himself, with production as varied as his eccentric cast of characters (check the opening theme from *Bullitt* on "Sweet Dick Willy" and the Ice-T homage "Three in the Morning.") **While it's now easier than ever for kids to play with their dicks and their hip-hop in their bedrooms, Kail is no MySpace rapper.** Since 2002, he's been sharpening his skills with the eight-man Customer Service crew at L.A.'s famed Project Blowed, the open-mic night that's been an

indie proving ground for everyone from Aceyalone to Busdriver.

Brash and slightly offensive ("Tell that Harajuku bitch to put the camera down," he says in one skit), Kail departs from Blowed's signature fast raps but he still slays with clever wordplay, adding a touch of West Coast grime to his syllables. Listeners can tell that he's a bit of closet nerd, rapping over a *Mega Man 3* sample and making references to Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Kail admits he's still trying to refine his style. "This album was my rough attempt to build my own stepping stool," he says. "It sounds so elementary to me, but I love that everyone has been able to bump my rookie shit-talk."

• Kail's *True Hollywood Squares* is out now on Alpha Pup. myspace.com/maharaja



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Five Star **Free Blood**

Experimental soulsters **Madeline Davy and John Pugh** (of !!! fame) discuss their favorite lords of the dance.

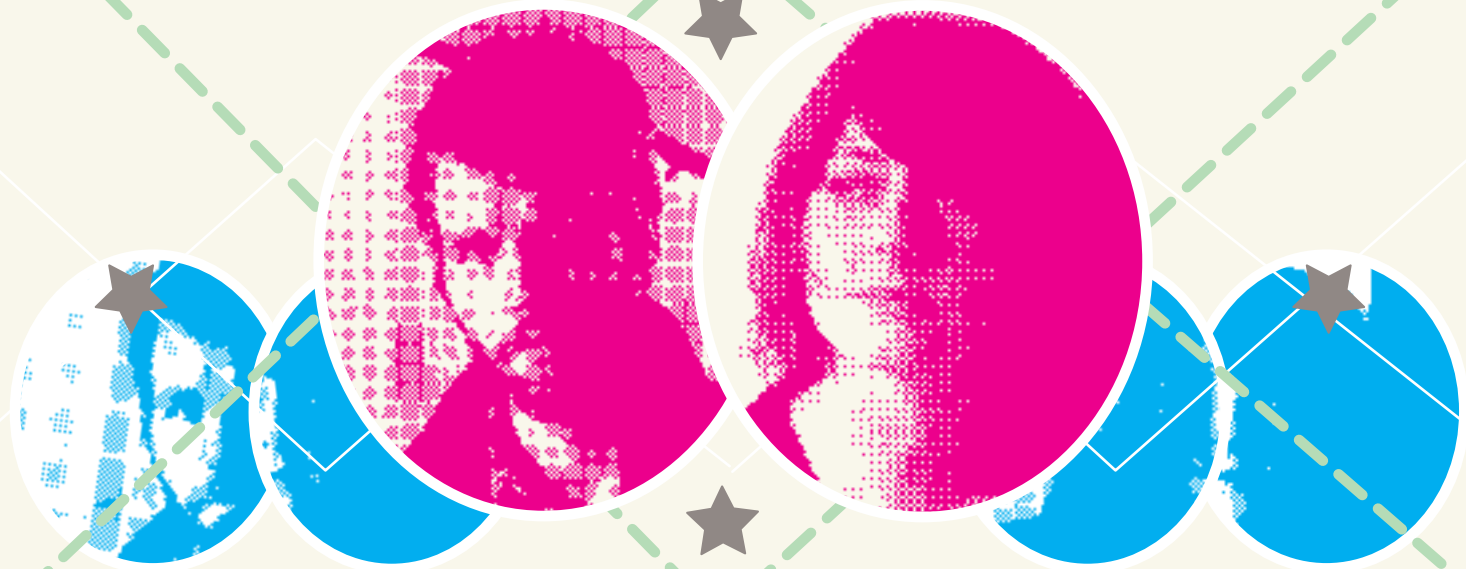
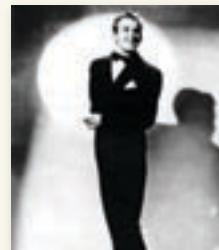


Photo Jake Walters



Busby Berkeley
Busby Berkeley is responsible for the classic style of movie-musical choreography yet his stuff stands as some of the most experimental and psychedelic. He was never hesitant to spend studio money on his vision, even it meant building a giant fountain or an orchestra of violins outlined in neon. Berkeley exploded perspective by moving the camera around, beneath, and above the dancers. The scenes build in visual density until the human forms become completely abstract.

Michael Clark
Like Berkeley, Clark often works with camera angles and editing. "Because We Must, Part 3" has a beautiful overhead scene of dancers moving their bodies and guitars together to form shapes. He makes hyper-relevant pieces, often collaborating with contemporaries from other fields like Wire and Leigh Bowery. He also has great pieces exploring the movements of one body. "Shivering Man" shifts between a nimble pixie character and a man who shakes uncontrollably.

David Byrne
The Talking Heads' "Once in a Lifetime" video plays off this idea of the body's limitations. David Byrne spazzes and jerks in a way that makes it seem as if his body is in control of him and not the other way around—there's a sort of humor involved. The video uses multiple and repeated sequences of his gesticulations to the point where you start to see the buried rhythm in his apparently random dancing/seizures. The repetition creates order, no matter how chaotic.

Bob Fosse
Fosse is the exact opposite of Byrne. He is serious precision in action. As a solo performer and choreographer, Fosse made every move and step so fucking sharp it cuts your eye just watching it. The fingers and toes are all pointed just so. The chin slanted in a very specific angle, either up or down. There are no accidents in Fosse's work. No camera trickery or weird props. Just one scarily adept performer strutting, swinging, dipping, scraping, and flipping across the stage—all in one take!

Soul Train
The *Soul Train* dance line is a source of inspiration. The idea of striving to be the freakiest/sexiest/smoothest/whatefuckingest dancer on the floor is sometimes sorely lacking from dance parties. If we all had just 20 seconds to show our stuff, you'd want it to count, right? Dancing with friends when you're trying to shock or just crack each other up is when you come up with your best moves.

Free Blood's *The Singles* is out in October on Rong/DFA.
myspace.com/freeblood



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Day in the Life

Peggy Noland

Candy-colored crazy times with Kansas City's fashion doyenne.



1. Wake up, wrap myself in botanicals, and muster my muse, Donkey, the hairless cat!

2. First things, first—SEQUINS. Then coffee. Dress like a freak to kill two birds with one stone: don't have to talk to anyone (or rather, no one will talk to me) and I keep the standard of dress high at the coffee shop.

3. Pick employees up for the day in limo, give strict instructions—must keep camera on them at all times. Will use footage for a reality show or memoirs (whichever comes first).

4. Photo shoot for Lovefoxxx's costumes! Get to PNKC Model Apartment, can't wake model up—have to model pieces myself, on top of him.

5. Second shot for Lovefoxxx—piece made from chips! Three rules for stage: must be 1) Big, 2) Light, 3) Delicious! (Model still asleep, now with even less clothes on. WTF?!?)



6. On to Peggy Noland—Kansas City for the first appointment of the day. She's semi-goth with a bad attitude, but she still has to wear white gloves!

7. Hardest part of each day. Dragging bags and bags and bags and bags of money to the bank. You understand.

8. Getting ready to go out—boyfriend insists on me being goth to be seen with him.

9. Get home. Watch some *Brooke Hogan*, change into cotton candy clothes, re-do my make-up, and curl up with some of my favorite things. Goodnight! XOXO!

peggynoland.com



For more wild times with Peggy Noland, visit XLR8R.com/120extras.



Noisia

Dutch drum & bass heads traffic in beautiful effects and extreme volume.

Deep within the crowded confines of a warehouse on the outskirts of the Dutch city of Groningen, Thijs de Vlieger is working up a sweat. “We don’t have an air conditioner in the studio, and we need one down here badly,” he says over the intermittent hum of a revolving fan. “Maybe that’s the secret to our music—the heat.”

As one-third of the drum & bass crew Noisia, the young DJ and producer has a point. His group is definitely hot right now—so much so that everyone from Robbie Williams to Moby has invited de Vlieger and partners-in-grime Nik Roos and Martijn van Sonderen to lend their distinct brand of aggro-filth to recent remixes. Meanwhile, Noisia’s self-curated labels Vision (“Noisia” spun 180 degrees) and Division are churning out 12-inch dancefloor burners at a furious clip, which prompted London’s Fabric club to reach out for their latest mix excursion, *Fabriclive 40*.

“We’ve all played sets at Fabric on our own,” de Vlieger explains, “so for this mix, we felt that we had to do our usual drum & bass thing, but we also had to play some deeper stuff: breakbeat, electro, and downtempo. That’s actually something we’re trying to focus on for our [forthcoming debut] album, which is gonna have a lot more breakbeat and electro than most people would expect from us.”

Working exclusively on Cubase with a slew of effects processors and filter plug-ins (and some key synths—the Access Virus TI and Roland SH-201 among them), Noisia has built a solid rep for delivering the unexpected when it comes to drum & bass. One of their earliest sides for Nerve Recordings (2003’s “Silicon”) showed a keen ear for constantly morphing sonic textures, precision-layered beats, and heavy-duty bass; they’ve since parlayed that aesthetic into a full-on production scheme that has sparked collaborations with Teebee, Mayhem, Phace, South African singer Tasha Baxter, and Amon Tobin.

“It’s always been a mission of ours to do music that you can listen to at home, in a car, or in a club,” de Vlieger says, citing fellow D&B artists Cause 4 Concern and Ed Rush & Optical as influences. “Every sound has to be beautiful in its own way. We don’t just put effects on a sound for the effect itself. Whatever processing we do, it has to give a nice, interesting sound to everything that we put out.”

To that end, *Fabriclive 40* cuts a radical profile. Rife with Noisia staples that include the stuttery, downtempo dub joint “Head Knot (Fabric Mix)” and the pitch-bent jeep beats of their remix for Moby’s “Alice”—which quickly reboots as a double-time jump-up anthem with ragga vocals from underground Brit MC Aynzil—the set is a mind-exploding snapshot of where drum & bass is headed.

“You need that element of randomness to be successful,” de Vlieger insists, “but you need to learn to be patient and wait for it. It usually always happens, but let’s face it—like football, you have to force your luck.”

• Noisia’s *Fabriclive 40* is out now on Fabric. noisia.nl

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Clothes Captioned

CTRL

Wild patterns and Hanoi Rocks flak jackets from Hawkeye-lovin' Helsinki dudes.



If you've got a sunny but cheeky disposition then CTRL Clothing has everything you want to wear. When they're not out chasing gnomes on their skateboards or eating smoked reindeer for breakfast, founders Timo Kuhn, Freeman, and Esa Hytönen are busy making funny turquoise t-shirts, zig-zag-printed leggings, and finely cut jackets that will take you from the half-pipe to the streets to the club in high style. Though they hail from Helsinki, Finland—home to salmon soup and blood cupping (look it up)—this *South Park*-loving trio is very influenced by American culture. Current obsessions include “the genius behind *Groundhog Day*, old-school Woody Allen films, fly-fishing, and the aroma of the suntan lotion on girls' skin,” not to mention that their fall collection was partially inspired by *M.A.S.H.* re-runs. The CTRL dudes claim the streetwear world is missing “heroes,” but we think they might just be poised for greatness. Therefore, we asked creative director Freeman to share with us some money looks from their fall line. *Tyra Bangs*
ctrlclothing.com



Hanoi jacket (\$249)
This jacket is inspired by the all-time best Finnish rock band, Hanoi Rocks. They got rich super-quick, and I guess they felt like a hundred dollars. Bangkok Shocks, Saigon Shakes, and Hanoi Rocks!



Thirdbase t-shirt (\$35)
This one is a big hurray for the most underrated planet of them all: Uranus, the seventh planet from the sun. No man has yet to be in Uranus?



Makepeace jacket (\$189)
This one is based on the idea of taking the army out of the concept of camouflage and, like the sugar on top, it has a peace sign on the sleeve.



Dempsey leather jacket (\$350)
This leather jacket has random stitch marks around the body, like it's been worn in a knife fight. Real '80s style, strongly inspired by the U.K. crime drama *Dempsey & Makepeace*.



Ghost Mango hood (\$89)
This hoodie honors the roots of all our African girlfriends. The pattern is my own interpretation of my girlfriend's mother's awesome Kenyan sweatsuit. The body is just plain black, like a ghost mango, invisible.



Mandela t-shirt (\$35)
Respect to Nelson Mandela. He's a funny African guy, an anti-apartheid activist, and leader of the African National Congress. He spent 27 years in prison. Not guilty.

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Deep thinkers make dubstep weighted with the sounds of their London hometown.

From left: Blackdown and Dusk

Dusk + Blackdown

With *Margins Music*, Dan “Dusk” Frampton and Martin “Blackdown” Clark join a long lineage of artists who’ve let the world know how London gets down. From London Posse’s “London Posse” to Tek 9’s “A London Sumting” to neighborhood-celebrating dubstep and grime cuts (Burial’s “South London Boroughs, Wiley’s “Bow E3”), the British urban underground has a tradition of proudly and defiantly associating its music with the place it was made.

Margins Music avoids rallying cries and posse cuts for tracks that evoke the ambiance and atmosphere at the edges of London, the “margins” of its title. The concept album ambles through West London with a string of heavily layered percussive cuts that dance under the weight of Punjabi and Hindi vocals, then veers East for more traditional moody grime and dubstep numbers featuring MCs Durrty Goodz and Trim; ambient interludes of car engines starting, rainfall, and MC chatter at a pirate radio station further add to the

overcast feeling.

Dusk and Blackdown crafted each track around what they call a “keysound” (also the name of the duo’s record label). “It refers to a sonic process,” Clark explains on the phone from his home in Northeast London. “It [refers] to a surrounding sound that you embed the music in.” Confusing, yes, but album opener “Darker Than East” gives a clue as to what he means. Built around a sample of a 1994 Roll Deep interview done by Clark, who is also a noted journalist and blogger, it evolves into a stark symphony of detuned bloops, trilling synthetic harps, and minimal claps, but quotes from MC Target and background chatter remain heavily woven throughout. “I just wanted to find a way of getting a lot of the sound of London into tracks, blurring the line between journalism, music production, and documenting our surroundings,” says Clark.

Margins Music has a more serious, introspective feel than many recent dubstep records—it’s more suited to

headphone train trips or night drives than peak-time speaker worship. “There’s always this one-upmanship, trying to get a little bit faster and a little bit harder with successive genres,” opines Clark. “I know that some dubstep guys are at 145 [bpm] now. It’s what [journalist] Simon Reynolds calls the ‘zone of fruitless intensification’ and it’s a little bit pointless. You can achieve a sense of momentum without really needing to go faster and harder. Our album feels faster or slower or uptempo or quite stripped back, but actually every track on the album is the same tempo, which is 138 [bpm].”

Though Clark can intellectualize about dubstep like the best of critics, don’t get it twisted—he and Dusk are still deeply indebted to the dancefloor. “I’m not really interested in headspace music—floaty, hippie stuff,” says Clark. “On the other hand, when stuff is straight physical music it also tends to bore me. It needs to be both.”

• Dusk & Blackdown’s *Margins Music* is out now on Keysound. myspace.com/keysoundrecordings

iCon



Photo: Annaleah De Masi skullcandy.com



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4. Creative Recreation Cesario shoe (\$95) cr8tiverecreation.com

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6. 3sixteen Trajectory t-shirt (\$31) 3sixteen.com

7. Passenger River's Edge t-shirt (\$45) flyingrumor.com

8. Upper Playground x Dora Drimalas Oma pint glass (\$15) upperplaygroundstore.com

9. Rocketworld I.W.G. zipper pulls (\$3.95) rocketworld.org

10. Skullcandy Ti Rasta headphones (\$79.95) skullcandy.com

11. Luxury Lab Pursuit of Happiness pillow (\$54) luxurylablinens.com

12. Etnies Plus x Fucking Awesome high-tops (\$79.95) etniesplus.com

The Life Aquatic

Adam Wallacavage creates his own worlds, starting with a goth-aquatic paradise.



Adam Wallacavage "The Green Fuzz of the Psychedelic Jungle" chandelier and sconces, 2008

"It sounds cliché but I was really blown away as a child by the Haunted Mansion ride and the 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea ride at Disney World," remembers Philadelphia artist Adam Wallacavage. This is obvious after a walk-through of his *Les Trésors de la Tanière de Neptune* show (which wrapped July 26 at NYC's Jonathan Levine Gallery).

Wallacavage transformed the space with a panoply of beautiful octopi-meet-Gothic light fixtures set against a backdrop of undulating

kelp wallpaper, all in a '60s cartoon palette of flat mint, purple, turquoise, and black.

The man's fantastical chandeliers and sconces don't come cheap (running anywhere from \$3,200 to \$14,000), but you may be inspired to learn that he made everything in the show in three months, by hand in his home using cast plaster, epoxy resin, and lamp parts. "I've spent countless hours in my life scouring flea markets and decorative arts museums and I never had money to

buy the things that inspired me, or I felt this compulsive urge to acquire things that was kinda obsessive," says Wallacavage, a spear fisherman and former Navy Seabee. "I basically realized that I had the talents to hand-make the things I wanted to see."

And the do-it-yourself-ness doesn't stop there. When he's not out snapping carnival rides or his friends doing 360 nose-grinds, the accomplished photographer is working on the Victorian-like interior of his house in South Philly

and creating custom wallpapers for his company, Curio Wallcoverings. The projects may vary, but a very personal aesthetic runs throughout. Says Wallacavage: "I like things to be outrageous yet timeless, beautiful yet mysterious, and dark but inspired by a good sense of spirituality."

Allura Dannon

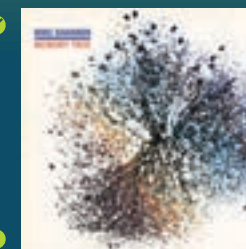
adamwallacavage.com,
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For a full interview with Adam Wallacavage, visit XLR8R.com/120extras.

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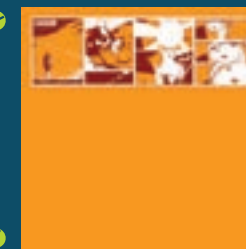
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ARTIST Mike Shannon
RELEASE 'Memory Tree'
LABEL Plus 8 Records

"It's been 10 years since Mike Shannon started making a name for himself on the international techno scene as a DJ, producer and label owner. Now, having recently relocated to Berlin he's crowning his first decade of active service with the 'Memory Tree', his third album in all and the first for another notable Canadian export - Plus 8 Records."



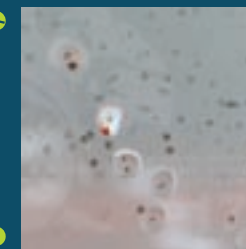
ARTIST Martyn
RELEASE 'Natural Selection / Vancouver'
LABEL 3024

"Martyn's 3024 mission continues with further explorations on the boundaries of dubstep and techno. If intergalactic robots discovered UK Garage and made their own version in 30th century style, 'Natural Selection' may well have been close to their output."



ARTIST Pigeon Funk
RELEASE 'The Largest Bird In The History Of The World...Ever'
LABEL Musique Risquée

"'Pigeon Funk' is San Francisco natives Sutekh (aka Seth Horvitz) and Kit Clayton (aka Joshua Kit Clayton) project. With their new album they deliver an angular and crazed version of 23rd-century funk from an ultra-robotic future. Get ready for The Largest Bird in the History of the World... Ever!"



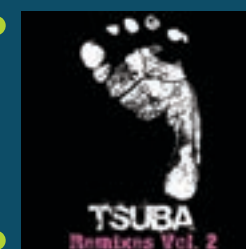
ARTIST Henrik Schwarz / Âme / Dixon
RELEASE 'D.P.O.M.P. EP'
LABEL Innervisions

"This is the new EP by Henrik Schwarz, Âme and Dixon. 21st century 'Wild Pitch' business. Dark, trippy and powerful."



ARTIST Morgan Geist
RELEASE 'Detroit'
LABEL Environ

"'Detroit' is the lead single from 'Double Night Time', the upcoming artist album from Morgan Geist (Metro Area, Unclassics). Featuring Jeremy Greenspan of Junior Boys on vocals, the single release is elevated by two superb Carl Craig remixes."



ARTIST Various Artists
RELEASE 'Tsuba Remixes Vol 2'
LABEL Tsuba Records

"Tsuba records is one of the UK's leading deep house & techno labels. Tsuba Remixes Vol 2 brings together the killer remixes from the last 12 months including mixes from Peter Dildo, Samim, Ripperton, HOSH, Ivan Smaghe & Tim Paris, Will Saul, Jamie Jones, Kevin Griffiths, Plasmik, Federico Molinari."

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A Bronx sing-jay takes it from the cathedral to the dancehall.

Treasure Don

Choirboy or rude boy? 38-year-old Bronx-based sing-jay Treasure Don might be both, balancing his sanctified childhood with rugged dancehall, hip-hop, and even dub (via work with eclectic producers Subatomic Sound System and Bastard Jazz's DJ DRM). "Treasure Don is a hybrid," Don says of his multifaceted sound. "I was raised in a fusion environment in the Bronx and eventually came up with my own style."

Christened Henry Walker by his Jamaican pastor father, who preached to an 18,000-strong New York congregation, Treasure Don was immersed in reggae and religion from the start. "God and reggae music were innate to our family... You'd hear reggae and hip-hop everywhere: coming out of people's cars, houses—you were submerged in it. We'd be driving to church at 8 a.m. and I'd hear, [singing Michael Palmer's classic '80s dancehall tune] *'Dem a lick shot... Lord a mercy!'*" Walker perfected his vocal skills as a chorister at Manhattan's prestigious Cathedral of St. John the Divine while simultaneously absorbing his father's extensive reggae tape collection.

Walker began hitting Manhattan clubs in the late '90s, singing with Sting's horn arranger Clark Gayton and Skatalites' lead trumpeter Kevin Batchelor, which led to connections with New York's Jamaican music fraternity. But even after college-tour stints with reggae band Fireproof in 2000, and a two-year live residency with musician King Django at Secho on Ludlow Street, Walker wasn't satisfied. "I wanted to be a volcano on the mic and build a whole island with hot lava from out of my mouth!" he says of his vibrant live performances, influenced by dancehall DJs Cutty Ranks, Flourgon, and Lieutenant Stitchie.

After years paying dues in clubs and airing his demos on local low-power radio stations, producers began lining up to record Walker's half-sung, half-chatted vocals—resulting in tunes like "The Chronicles," "Ghetto Champion," and "Heart of Gold."

Walker has seven beats chosen for his next album, including reggae joints from Alphonso and Myrie and hip-hop heat from Ruff Rydaz producers Driz and J-Knocka. But this rude-boy toaster hasn't abandoned his righteous roots—he still seeks to minister through his music. "I'm the son of a preacher. If you're having a problem I need to talk to you," he explains. "At one of our shows, there was this person way in the back of the room looking stressed. The gig was going well, everyone was having a good time, I'm feeling high, but I was conscious of this person. So I changed the lyrics I was singing at that moment to 'In your time, you'll be healed.' He knew I was talking to him."

• myspace.com/treasuredon



More fire and brimstone with Treasure Don at XLR8R.com/120extras.

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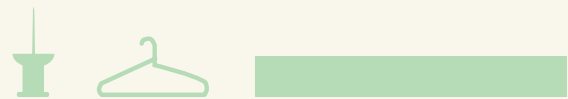
Episode 65
Jamie Lidell and His All-You-Can-Eat Sonic Buffet

Episode 66
Crate Digging with Kon & Amir

Episode 69
Drop the Lime at Coney Island

L.A. Style

Future soul's wild pair tells us what's worth wearing in Southern California.



For the past few years, L.A. duo **J*Davey** has been adding new dimensions to future soul, melding the genre's already avant-R&B with electro, surf rock, and '60s influences. But though Jack Davey's airy, Cali-accented Erykah Badu-styled vocals and Brook D'Leau's off-kilter hip-hop beats are their musical signature, the two are equally recognizable for their patterned-and-mohawked personal style, so we rang them up and asked them what they're obsessed with now. *Tyra Bangs* jdaveybaby.com

Rojas brand

I love Rojas mini-dresses and their prints. Some of the pieces look like oversized tank tops—very comfy to throw on for a hot summer's day yet flashy enough for a night on the town. I get my Rojas pieces from Wasteland on Melrose—my fave store in L.A.



Insight brand

I love this line because all the pieces are comfy to throw on, yet super-stylish, a little quirky, and fun. The line is available at Barracuda in L.A. and the prices are reasonable.



Aviator caps

My uncle Alakazia (he's just as fabulous as his name sounds) has a hat company called Le Chapeau by Alakazia and he custom-makes me aviator caps in different color leathers. They're great stage pieces.

Brooches

My great-grandmother had amazing brooches that she gave to my mother when she died. They're a great accessory to add a classic dimension to a current style. I've found some great wooden ones at Show Pony in Silver Lake.

Report signature shoes

I fell in love with their gold-sequined open-toe wedges and I've been hooked on their collection ever since. Their heels are high and sexy—the kind of shoes you can dance or roll around in bed in.

3/4-length jackets

If you're going to carry a sawed-off, this is the way to do it. Kidding. These jackets are the easiest things to dress up or down, plus they have a bit of a London rudeboy aspect to them.

Calvin Klein boxer briefs

I'm not even certain why I have this fascination. They're super-comfortable and I also remember Marty McFly's mom thinking that was his name in 1955 when she saw the name printed on his underwear.

Drawing on Payless generic Keds

It seems that plainer shoes in the fashion world aren't necessarily cheaper. I get a Keds-style shoe from Payless and I let my imagination go to work. Sometimes people think they're actually from some expensive boutique shop. I just keep my mouth shut and shrug.



For more of J*Davey's style favorites, visit XLR8R.com/120extras.



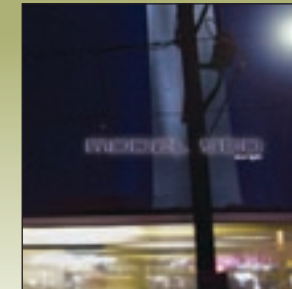
PRURIENT
Arrowhead CD

Dominick Fernow (Prurient) runs the Hospital Productions label and store, and has been a mainstay of the noise genre for over a decade, with 100+ releases spanning all formats. *Arrowhead* is his first release on Editions Mego, 3 brain-bashing tracks of high-end feedback, disturbed vocals and twisted percussion. Truly demented.



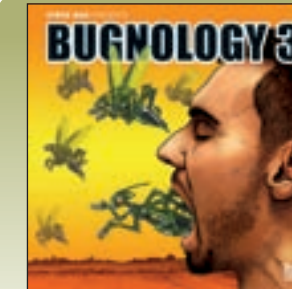
MIKE SHANNON
Memory Tree CD/2LP

It's been 10 years since **Mike Shannon** started making a name for himself on the international techno scene, and now, having recently made the familiar exodus to Berlin, he crowns his first decade with *Memory Tree*. Anyone familiar with him will recognize his dark and soulful style—embracing the future, and delivering kick-ass, funk-inflected beats.



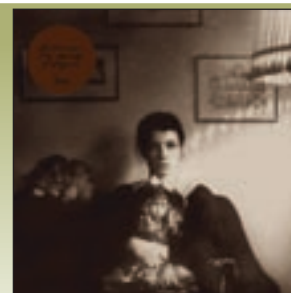
MODEL 500
Starlight CD/2LP

This is the remastered original "Starlight" from the Godfather of Techno, **Juan Atkins** aka **Model 500**, originally released on 12" by Metroplex in 1995. Originally engineered by **Basic Channel's** **Moritz von Oswald**, this release includes 9 specially commissioned new remixes by **Deepchord**, **Echospace**, **Mike Huckaby**, and **Intrusion**.



STEVE BUG
Bugnology 3 CD

As usual, it's been a busy, hot & sweaty summer for **Steve Bug** and his **Poker Flat** label, with a string of recent hits and rapturous parties all over the globe. Steve has taken a break from his insane schedule to drop his 3rd *Bugnology* mix for the label, and as usual, he demonstrates a flow like no other. Featuring floor-destroyers by **Anton Zap**, **Tigerskin**, **Lee Jones**, **Peace Division**, and more.



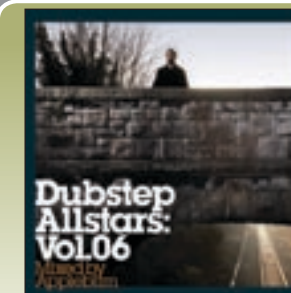
GOLDMUND
The Malady of Elegance CD/LP

For his second full-length, Boston-based composer **Keith Kenniff** aka **Helios** again restricts himself to the piano in conjuring up his humble soundscapes and once again, the listener is pulled into a deep, meditative and filmic world. Fans of **Erik Satie**, **Sylvain Chauveau** and **Loren Connors** will be enraptured.



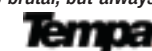
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Kompakt Total 9 2CD/3LP

Marking 15 years (!) of enduring electronic music from Cologne's hardest working record label, another shining *Total* compilation has arrived, and so it must be summer and time for some more parties! Featuring favorites from 2008, plus new and exclusive tracks from **Supremayer**, **The Modernist**, **Freiland** & **Thomas Fehlmann**.



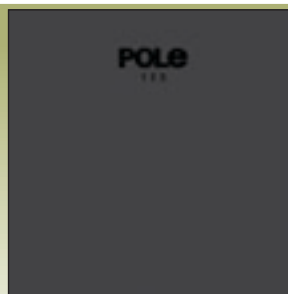
APPLEBLIM
Dubstep Allstars Vol. 06 CD

Volume 6 of **Tempa's** *Dubstep Allstars* series, curated and mixed by Bristol-based producer/DJ **Laurie "Appleblim" Osborne**. Reminiscent of **Basic Channel** and **Renegade Soundwave**, Osborne's selection moves from devastating low-end to knee-bending groove, with fresh cuts by **2562**, **Martyn**, **Skream** and more. "...sometimes brutal, but always life-affirming stuff."
—**Boomkat**



BOOM PAM
Puerto Rican Nights CD

Boom Pam returns with their second album, made up entirely of cover songs they've been playing live for years. "*Boom Pam show themselves to be one of those spirited 'try anything once' groups in the vein of such legends as Mano Negra and Babasonicos, combining their love of surf with Eastern European styles.*" —**Billboard**



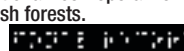
POLE
1 2 3 3CD

Much-needed deluxe 3CD reissue of **Stefan Betke's** seminal trilogy, with 4 bonus tracks. Starting with the defective **Waldorf 4 Pole** filter that gave him his name, as well as his trademark "crackling" sound, these legendary minimal dub monsters straddle a world between euphony and avant-garde, pop and experiment. Completely essential.



PAAVOHARJU
Laulu Laakson Kukista CD/LP

Laulu Laakson Kukista is the highly-anticipated second full-length release on **Fonal Records** from Finland's **Paavoharju**, the critically-lauded collective formed around two brothers—**Lauri** and **Olli Ainala**—and their troupe of associates, all ascetic born-again Christians! Mind-bending devotional rock-opera from the deepest Finnish forests.



FUCK BUTTONS
Street Horrrsing CD

Between their relentless touring schedule and the massive acclaim for their debut release *Street Horrrsing*, the duo of **Andrew Hung** and **Benjamin John Power** have turned the world on with their euphoric, galaxy-imploding style. Embarking on a massive U.S. tour this September with **Mogwai**—not to be missed!



ALEXANDER TUCKER
Portal CD/LP

UK-based **Alexander Tucker's** third release for **ATP** is a work of unparalleled bewitching splendor. With a voice comparable to *Meddle*-era **David Gilmour** or **John Martyn** on *Solid Air*, *Portal* is a work of such extraordinary majesty, that even trying to surmise it in words amounts to heresy. Playing at **All Tomorrow's Parties** in NY in September.



Spin Cycle



Magnetic Morning



Wondering what happened to Junior Boy **Johnny Dark**? He's just announced his collaboration with East Coast electro-disco dude **San Serac** as **Stereo Image**. Their self-titled disc is due this month.

Feeding frenzy: **Girl Talk** takes *Feed the Animals* nationwide this fall alongside **Hearts of Darknests**, **CX KIDTRONIK**, and **The Death Set**. Check dates at myspace.com/girltalkmusic.

No stranger to controversy, **The Coup's Boots Riley** was charged in June with using "abusive

language" at the Bayou Boogaloo & Cajun Food Festival in Norfolk, VA. It's the first time the charge has ever been issued to a performer, so naturally Boots feels like something's fishy—and plans to fight the charge.

Also in June, a Dublin show by queer club mavens **Cazwell** and **Amanda Lepore** was cancelled due to a bomb scare. "All I know from police is they got repeat phone calls all day saying our show was gonna get bombed," offered Cazwell.

C-Rayz Walz has teamed up with **Kosha Dillz** for the first-ever Jewish/African American hip-hop album.

The Sub Pop Singles Club returns! Subscribe to version 3.0 of the famed 7" series and secure your 10-years-from-now eBay fortune. If you miss out, you can at least pick up Loser Pale Ale, a special Sub Pop 20th Anniversary brew crafted by Seattle's Elysian Brewery.

Coming up

Jesus and Mary Chain's *The Power of Negative Thinking: B-Sides & Rarities* boxed set (Rhino), **Murs' Murs for President** (Warner Bros), **Tittsworth's 12 Steps** (Plant Music), **Gang Gang Dance's Saint Dymphna** (The Social Registry), and **Deerhunter's Microcastle** (Kranky).



Photo: Shawn Brackbill

RIP DJ K-Swift

On July 21st, DJ Khia "K-Swift" Edgerton died from neck injuries suffered in a swimming pool accident in her hometown of Baltimore, MD. The 29-year-old artist, who has often been called the queen of the Baltimore club scene, rose to prominence as a DJ on Baltimore's 92Q Jams radio station. She was also a member of the Violator-All Star DJ Coalition and the all-female group Murda Mamis. Fans gathered at 92Q's parking lot on the night of her death to mourn her passing.

In July, Suge Knight's Death Row Records, the infamous home to **Snoop Dogg**, **Tupac Shakur**, and **Dr. Dre**, was sold at auction for \$24 million to New York-based Global Music Group.

Feel like dancin': New York's City Hall is looking to loosen—or potentially kill—the dreaded cabaret license. Stay tuned.

Missed the **Swervedriver** tour? Catch frontman **Adam Franklin** with

Interpol's Sam Fogarino in their side-gig, **Magnetic Morning**, on tour this fall.

Platinum Pied Pipers have been rolling out pieces of a documentary on the making of their new *Abundance* LP at myspace.com/platinumpiedpipers.

Lost techno classics from Monika Enterprise, Traum, Trapez, Max. Ernst, and Karaoke Kalk can now be purchased digitally at myx2u.com.

DJ-chart publishing made easy: Upload and disseminate your playlists to Facebook and MySpace at juno.co.uk.

Missed the **Joy Division** documentary? Need a Zune? Grab the limited-edition **Peter Saville**-designed player with the film preinstalled at zuneoriginals.net and get morbid!



SHUFFLE MORE

Mixtape by Greg Saunier of Deerhoof

1. Michael Bolton "Puccini's Recondita Armonia"
Bolton singing opera with a full orchestra. Two totally different beauties coming together in one place. A real tear-jerker.

2. Brigitte Bardot "Invitango"
This song never settles into a rhythm or mood. It keeps you on your toes. We play this at our shows as between-band background music.

3. Jean-Claude Risset "#301"
From a compilation of early computer music that we got from a friend who is in the band Nymph. It's only 10 seconds long.

4. Ruth Hohmann & Erbe-Chor "Im Staub Der Sterne (Das Licht)"
My friend Jeremy gave me this beautiful song. Sounds a bit like Radiohead if they had a chorus of women singing.

5. The Beatles "You Can't Do That"
How embarrassing. Now everyone knows I like The Beatles!

6. The Rolling Stones "Casino Boogie"
I was hoping my iPod would make me look hip but alas, the Beatles-Stones double-whammy has erased my prospects.

7. Anton Webern "Six Pieces for String Quartet, III"
This is only one minute long but it's like a whole novel got condensed into that one minute.

8. Los Van Van "Pero a Mi Manera"
Every time I hear the drummer for this Cuban group I get lost in admiration. I also heard he comes from my hometown of Columbia, MD.

9. Sonny Rollins "Hold 'Em Joe"
One of SR's beloved calypso performances. Relentless four-on-the-floor vamp and invention from Sonny, who just can't stop coming up with new variations of the melody.

10. The Staple Singers "Freedom Highway"
Best song ever? Live performance in a church, voices distorting the PA. Highly recommended.

Deerhoof's *Offend Maggie* is out in October on Kill Rock Stars. myspace.com/deerhoof

Radio On: XLR8R's current top 10

- Morgan Geist *Double Night Time* (Environ)
- Studio *Yearbook 2* (Information)
- The Cool Kids *That's Stupid Mixtape* (C.A.K.E.)
- Keak Da Sneak *Deified* (Koch)
- Syclops *I've Got My Eye on You* (DFA)
- Digitalism *Kitsune Tabloid* (Kitsune)
- Girl Talk *Feed the Animals* (Illegal Art)
- Lemonade *Lemonade* (True Panther Sounds)
- Toby Tobias *Space Shuffle* (Rekids)
- Wolf Parade *At Mount Zoomer* (Sub Pop)
- Salem *Fuckt* (Acephale)



;D Phone Pix! From Jason Forrest



This is one of the Rubbish Fairies from the House of Doll at Glastonbury two weeks ago. Was fucking super-crazy, literally, like something from *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome!* RRRRAVVVEEEE!!

Jason Forrest's *Panther Tracks Vol. 2* (recorded as DJ Donna Summer) is out now on Cock Rock Disco. cockrockdisco.com

TIME TRAVELLER **DAEDELUS** MOVES THROUGH
TWO CENTURIES OF AVANT-GARDE MUSIC AND STYLE.



WORDS [ALI GITLOW](#) PHOTOS [YE RIN MOK](#)

As a child, Alfred Weisberg-Roberts was a loner. Young Alfred was not tromping about shirtless on a skateboard with the Z-Boys in his hometown of Santa Monica, California; he was inside reading, learning how to play classical instruments, and traveling through fictional worlds of his own creation. He had an interest in mythology, and particularly enjoyed the story of Daedalus, a skilled craftsman and ingenious inventor. And though he can't save dance music from repetitious doom and drone, the modern-day Daedelus (spelled differently to avoid confusion) may just be able to save a few souls on the dancefloor—especially with his new album, *Love To Make Music To*.

Though *Love To Make Music To* may be Daedelus' most high-profile album yet, he has been a prominent fixture on the L.A. avant-beats scene since 2001, starting with *Portrait of the Artist* (Distill) and *Her's Is >[sic]* (Phthalo). On 2002's *Invention*, he defined his atmospheric, intense-yet-sexy sound, while '03 and '04 yielded five more full-lengths, including *The Weather*—a collabo with MCs Busdriver and Radioinactive that he calls his “moon-bounce hip-hop record” and *Of Snowdonia* and *A Gent Agent*, two doe-eyed sleepwalks whose swirling synths and choppy beats occasionally coalesce into an all-out jungle frenzy.

Since catching the ears of Ninja Tune, Daedelus has released his most polished records yet: 2005's *Gilded Age*—meets-future-rap number *Exquisite Corpse*, and 2006's *Denies the Day's Demise*, where he masters the grandness of his samples while exploring the samba idiom.

Daedelus, a student of classical jazz, fell in love with rave music at age 14, when he first heard U.K. pirate radio. All of his records have invoked this influence, but *Love To Make Music To* wears the reference clearly on its sleeve, as it finds the artist surveying the current landscape of dubstep, electro, hip-hop, and Baltimore club music. “Fair Weather Friends” is a happy, electro-pop teen dream, while darker tracks like “Hrs:Mins:Secs” and “I Took Two” marry wonky basslines to hard-hitting kicks. On “Bass in It,” Taz Arnold of Sa-Ra shouts out various

regional forms of bass music, while “My Beau” is a calculated rework of Ghost Town DJ's 1996 Miami bass jam “My Boo” that's dedicated to Victorian dandy Beau Brummell.

Of course, this wouldn't be a Daedelus record without a fanciful concept, and *Love To Make Music To* is imbued with a magical backstory. During the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Alfred is electrocuted while traveling in Nikola Tesla's entourage. He rises from the dead two days later and creates this record (in Tesla's labs) to explain what music of the future sounds like.

It's a clever conceit, one that ties together Daedelus' simultaneous interest in the future and the past. It also helps audiences understand his eclectic live show, for which he's ditched the laptop (which he calls “the little blue screen of death”) in favor of an ultra-futuristic Monome—a handmade MIDI controller with open-source software that allows for serious ad hoc beat-smithing. And he plays it while dressed like a Victorian dandy.

You see, when he's not immersed in chopping beats, Alfred and his wife, Laura—who have changed their last name to Darlington—pursue their interest in 19th-century culture, searching for frock coats at flea markets and making sweet, faraway-sounding folk music together as The Long Lost (their album is also forthcoming on Ninja Tune). Though this old-world style may seem in complete opposition to his ultra-contemporary music,

Daedelus leverages the two with humility and a disgusting amount of style. We called him up in L.A. to find out how.

Daedelus' *Love To Make Music To* is out now on Ninja Tune. myspace.com/daedelusdarling

Does one record stand out as defining your sonic aesthetic?

For a long time, I thought the most important piece I had done was my first release, “A Mashnote.” It got released on a compilation called *dublabb presents: Freeways*. It's a song full of all these swooping strings, and it has this funny broken rhythm that keeps on morphing around and never really sitting still. It has the sound of keyboard clicking at the beginning, clacking out a little love letter I was writing. It was a crazy accidental track that people really liked; it had a life of its own. I thought I'd never be able to do anything like that again. Also, I thought, “I really want my music to be conceptual and physical. I don't want either element to overpower the other one but, gosh, it's fun to have both.” I quickly learned the truth is that, if you're ever really happy with something, you can't do it again because it's kind of dead and done. If anything is a complete statement, I would probably have no reason to do another record.





"I'M NOT MAKING MUSIC FOR THE SITUATION..."



"I'M MAKING MUSIC FOR THE SITUATION
THAT ISN'T THERE."

ALFRED AND LAURA DARLINGTON AT HOME IN LOS ANGELES.

" WITH PREVIOUS RECORDS I'VE BURIED MYSELF IN
CONCEPTUAL IDEAS, NOW, I'M REALLY LETTING THE MUSIC
PLAY BY ITSELF. "

Why did you choose the title *Love To Make Music To* for your new album?

I have always tried to assign way too much meaning to album titles and song titles. I did a record called *A Gent Agent* and I put so much meaning into every song, and all the samples tied into the song titles... and nobody cares. They're going to download it, they're not going to have the artwork. It's totally cool. I come from the perspective of the more you put there, the more people can get into possibly. You dig a hole and if you dig it deep enough, everyone could be buried there.

For this [album], it's two things. I've always played around with the idea of environmental listening music. You could call it easy-listening music, lounge-record style. [It's about] trying to take that idea and totally twist it to the point where you're making your own movie music. 'Music to make love to' is a common phrase from that period: 'Music to Romance to,' 'Music to Dine to.' *Love To Make Music To* was an easy twist on it. It really shows how I'm making music backwards. I'm not making music for the situation, I'm making music for the situation that isn't there. This is my first record where I feel comfortable trying to make it dance more. Every track is pretty uptempo, pretty engaged in that idea. I want more verbs! Less nouns, more verbs. It's perfect.

Which track came the most naturally?

The one I knew I needed to [have] on there... was "I Car(Ry) Us." Not because it's a not-so-clever reference to Icarus—worst title ever, possibly—but I wanted to have a bit more tragedy on the record. It was getting to be this bright, shiny thing, and I hope that song really gets the sweet-and-sadness of the Daedalus story. The lyrics are all from the point of view of Icarus. Trying to tap that emotion is my advantage on this whole thing.

How do you search out samples?

I try to come from the conceptual idea of having no limits about it. I treat everything like a sample—be it an actual record of some sort of source material or instruments I'm playing, I'll throw it into the same

audio editor. I see people... sampling for cliché purposes, like, 'Oh, this is this great Parliament loop. Here's this great thing and I want to keep its essence so I'm not going to touch it too hard.' You can't destroy a sample. You can maul it as much as you want but you can never really lose its essence. So why not put as much personality into it as possible? In terms of sample selection, I try to be very smart about what I'm using because I know people are going to suss it out. I try to be sensitive to that and to leave my own mark on it. It's impossible not to—as soon as you record it and isolate it from its other parts, it's marked. For instance, when your needle drops on a record, at home or at a record store, you might hear something, a rhythm turned around a way you never could hear it because you're not starting on the one, you're starting on the two-and. And suddenly it's this crazy Afrobeat thing and you're like, 'Oh my god, I want to get that!'

How do you think your records have evolved over time and what major changes have you made?

I am not a super-confident creator. I don't write notes on paper and go, 'Aw, this is awesome! This is brilliant!' I really usually work from a place of fear and lack of confidence. In a way, having the confidence to make dance [music] is big, because with previous records I've buried myself in conceptual ideas. [Now, I'm] really letting the music play by itself. It's like you take a choir of kids and let them fight it out—there's going to be a pecking order that evolves. There's gonna be melodies that come out of the music itself.

I try to stay pretty unconscious generally in the studio. I try to keep my process pretty quick and tight so that when I'm ripping through records, for instance, and I come across a melody that's particularly nice, I'll just take it real quick and twist it on its head as fast as I can before I really am conscious of it. That way it usually yields results that are a little outside of myself, which is the best. Same thing with instruments: When you sit down at a piano, one of the keys is kind of sticky, it doesn't play too well, so you skip that key and use all the other keys and suddenly a melody happens naturally out of that. Everything has that moment.

There's a natural stubbornness to almost everything—if you play around with it you're going to find it sings its own way.

What do you like best about using the Monome?

It's a non-rigid performance device. You can be really sensitive and improvise everything. I might have some game plan, like, 'Oh, I'll play this song probably, and I'll play this song,' and maybe in the course of the night people will yell songs and [I'll] drop it in, combine it with something else, and have the computer be there to [have] a rapport with the audience. [That's] so different than what most computers do with electronic music, which is [create] a wall between the audience and a performer. Like a physical wall. The Great Wall. I really do feel like this machine is allowing real communication rather than musical communication. It transcends language and all these kind of barriers.

When and why did you start wearing frock coats?

That was something that was at the back of my brain for a long time. The heightened sense of itself, the foreignness. The real sense of the clothing started between my wife and I. We would kind of dress up at home. Not like cosplay or roleplaying or anything so deviant, we just both enjoyed the contour and the look. Maybe it's also the kind of thing where I was a chubby kid as a child and definitely awkward [because of] it. At a certain point in college I lost a lot of weight and the idea of fitted clothes was really amazing. Also there was a sense I was dealing in mod culture in the late '90s; these Northern soul parties. Also there was a certain bend, at least in L.A., on jungle culture being mod culture. It was a natural progression. You take all of this soul music that we're sampling, all these James Brown breaks and stuff, and think about what they're doing with it now. It is a direct connection and yet, why are people wearing silly baggy clothes when they can



“G O S H , I F E V E R Y T H I N G W E D I D M E A N T
S O M E T H I N G ? I T W O U L D T A K E A L O N G T I M E
T O D O T H I N G S I .”



be wearing this wonderful fitted clothing? I had been wearing it around the house with my wife and taking portraits and pictures and silly things. But when it came to stage time I would dress up in normal clothes and I was like any bum... The audience is looking at a reflection of themselves and there's nothing to it. If anything, it takes the air out of the room a little bit. It makes it kind of bland. At the same time I was messing around with using laptops onstage, as was the terrible fashion of the time. And it was another element of super-mundaneness. I was nervous enough onstage; I've never been a natural performer. In 2003 I began to be serious about it and decided to try to see what worked. The first [idea] was to get away from the laptop and the second was to get more comfortable onstage.

Do you consider yourself a dandy?

Absolutely. There's one key tenet—I'm not too much of a pretty boy, so I'm maybe missing some of the essential things that made dandies dandies. One of the important things to me about the conceptual idea for the dandyist movement was the fact that every gesture was art. That's big. It's what really married me to people like Beau Brummell. He would spend three hours every morning getting himself together because he was his own work of art. He would wear something slightly askew because it meant something. I mean, gosh, if everything we did meant something? It would take a long time to do things! And that would be wonderful. Anytime you have to dip your watch chain into perfume and then into tea because you want the scent just right? I mean, if somebody's close enough to smell your watch chain, it means a lot.

Who are your Victorian style icons?

Beau Brummell's a big one. You have all the great composers of the time, all the crazy poets. It was a period of time when, if you didn't have syphilis, you weren't an artist. That was a weird baseline: disease equals artistry. It gives you the kind of power of imagination that you needed to be a great

artist. I try not to think of someone specific, but I really like the pre-death-of-Prince-Albert Victorians, because there was a lot of color and more flair.

Do you have an interest in Greek mythology in general?

Greek mythology tends to be really good because the stories are so heightened. All of this is just about peacocking to the absurdity that art should be. You have a story about Zeus changing into a swan to sleep with some girl he likes? Orpheus: greatest musician of his age, able to communicate with the animals. Ruins it all because his love for his betrothed overpowers him to look back. It so much has to do with sampling, it's bananas. When I'm sampling nowadays I try to take a page from [Orpheus'] story and I try not to really learn what I'm sampling. I have the records and everything but I try not to think about it because if they ever put me under a polygraph test, I wouldn't really know. Somebody will be like, 'Oh, you used this stupid record that's super-common,' and I'm like, 'Oh, I shouldn't be doing that!' It's definitely a lesson learned. Your unconscious mind sometimes is the most powerful one and you don't want to learn too much or it can come back and drag you to Hades. You look at mythology from other countries too, it's stories—that's all we're here to do, tell some stories.

Anything else?

I really have changed my mind recently about being a musician. I'm not in the business of music. Music is my passion, not my business. My business is caffeine management. All I do is intake a certain amount of caffeine until people deem that it's time, possibly, for me to be onstage and I'll do that. Then I'll un-caffeinate for a while until I have to repeat the process. I recommend Red Bull Cola and coffee-flavored gelato.

□ TRES BEAU A VICTORIAN SARTORIAL PRIMER.

“Being a guy and existing in our current world of accessories, like what do we have?” opines Daedelus. “I can wear sunglasses. I can wear shoes. I can wear maybe a baseball cap. It plain old sucks. Fashion is a dialogue; you're saying something with every piece you're wearing. So, let's talk about what a man could wear [in Victorian times]. He could wear shoes, spats, he could wear socks, suspended socks, he could wear belts, britches, suspenders, frock coats, waistcoats, half coats, quarter-length coats. It was freezing so you could wear coats on top of coats on top of coats and you're great, you're grand. People were wearing anything and it was awesome.”

Finding the perfect Victorian-era gear is, as Daedelus explains, “like record hunting. If you turn off your mind to the possibility, you're not going to find it. But if you're open, you can find crazy treasure anywhere.” Check out some of his favorite 19th-century swag.

HAIR JEWELRY

“Every time your betrothed would go off to war, they might give you a lock of their hair. Also, when someone died of disease, you took some of their hair. People were making jewelry out of human hair. The amount of knotting and tying! Hair is not a format that takes well to working with. It's more difficult than any precious metal.”

MAD HATTERS' TOP HATS

“The hatter would take mercury and be able to bend pieces of felt and cloth into these crazy creations, driving them batty at the same time... which is fun, but unfortunate for them.”

POCKET WATCH

“Any time you take technology and mix it with an art it usually produces crazy results. [Take] the pocket watch... For one, it's big and it says a ton about the person, their station [in life]. Everyone all of a sudden needs to know the time. Before the cell phone, did you need to reach anyone that fast? No. And before the


pocket watch did you need to get anywhere that fast? Not really.”

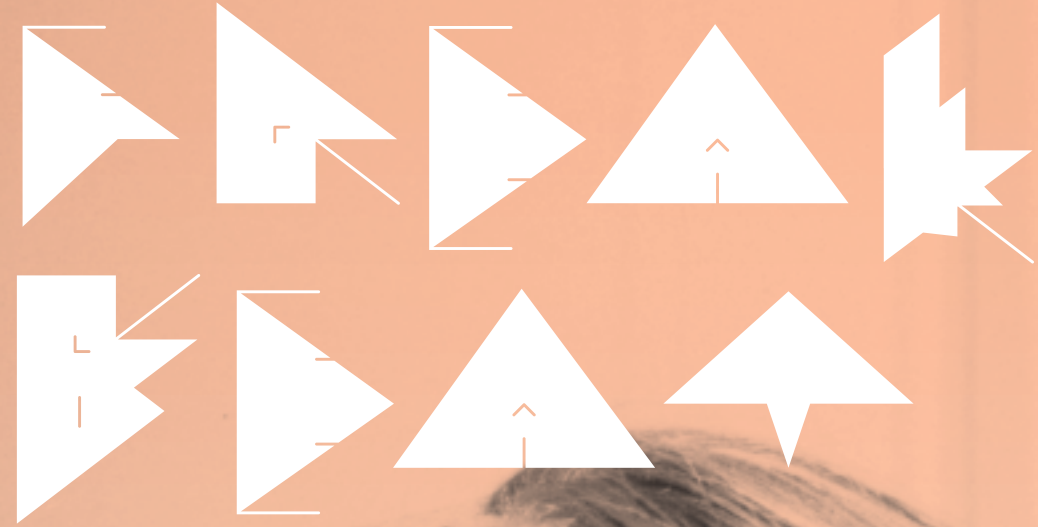
TAILORED COATS

“Suddenly, men have a waist! Whatever happened to the waist, why is it gone? Women have it. Women have bellybuttons, men have bellybuttons. We both have waists. Okay, we can do this.”

SPATS

“Spats are dope! They are really inventive because you had to have a way of keeping all that terrible mud out of your shoes. All of a sudden you take something made for utilitarian purposes and you give it a fashion, actual aesthetic purpose—it sings.”

 Check out our exclusive *XLR8R TV* interview with Daedelus at XLR8R.com/120extras.



BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG HAIR, AND OTHER
SOUTHERN-FRIED SCENES FROM
ATHENS, GEORGIA'S PSYCHEDELIC DANCE-ROCK UNDERGROUND.

FROM LEFT: VANESSA BRISCOE HAY OF PYLON, UNKNOWN GUEST, AND KATE PIERSON OF THE B-52'S AT A HOUSE PARTY IN ATHENS.

INTERVIEWS [TONY WARE](#)
PHOTOS COURTESY OF [MICHAEL LACHOWSKI](#) AND [OF MONTREAL](#)

“My best friend in college, her mother would go to Paris each year for her clothes, and she once gave me a camel-hair coat plus two big pieces of advice,” says Vanessa Briscoe Hay, lead singer of post-punk band Pylon, while sharing a Middle Eastern snack platter and memories from 30 years of the Athens, Georgia music scene.

“She said, ‘If you ever get a really nice piece of clothing, don’t get rid of it. Save it and take care of it, because it will always come back in style. And the other advice was to try not to get married more than once, because men are so hard to train.’”

A student at the University of Georgia’s Lamar Dodd School of Art during the ’70s, Hay was part of a close-knit, creatively open community that spawned the high-concept, low-rent cheerleading of The B-52’s, the maximized minimalism of Pylon’s angular meta-mysteries, as well as numerous lesser known (but no less fondly remembered) contemporaries such as The Side Effects, The Tone Tones, The Method Actors, Oh-OK, and Love Tractor. Flash forward 20 years and Athens would bleed peppermint and paisley, fostering a psychedelic pop scene out of which emerged Of Montreal, expanded to a sextet led by Kevin Barnes and trafficking in dancefloor-friendly fringe iconography.

Now it’s 2008, and The B-52’s have just released *Funplex*, their first studio album in 16 years, partially recorded in Athens. Pylon, following a 2004 reunion, is readying the reissue of the group’s second album, *Chomp*, on James Murphy’s DFA Records. And Of Montreal is launching a tour behind *Skeletal Lamping* (Polyvinyl), the group’s most ambitious collection of autoaudioerotic booty calls. Communal freak-outs are back in style, so we sat down with several Athens mainstays and pieced together a firsthand account of how the temple of art-school-skewed freak beat was built.



JOHN MARTIN TAYLOR
(writer/photographer)

Athens, like most college towns, has always been liberal, in spite of its founding fathers’ having purposely placed the University way up in the hinterlands of Georgia in 1785, far away from the bawdy port of Savannah (which was then the capital of the state). UGA has apparently always been a party town, probably because it is isolated and because of its strong fine arts traditions. Until the ’70s, those parties more closely resembled frat parties à la *Animal House*. As pot replaced beer, and rock replaced beach music, and glam aesthetics entered the everyday vernacular, Athens gatherings became more mind- and gender-bending than keg parties had ever been. We wore fake fur and drank cocktails. The war was over. Jimmy Carter, a Georgian and a Democrat, was in the White House. As far as we were concerned, times were good.

FRED SCHNEIDER
(The B-52’s)

You could get away with things in Athens, and it was very creative. A lot of it was performance. I wrote a book [*Bleb*, a handwritten collection of poems], and even before the band, Keith [Strickland, The B-52’s guitarist/songwriter] and I got together in his basement and wrote stuff. We did another thing that went on like four hours with three songs and a slideshow of Canada and people in drag called Night Soil. We did a lot of things, because there was nothing else except bar bands you didn’t want to go see. And clubs were just for going to when it was 25-cent beer night. Then you crashed parties ‘til you were locked out.

VANESSA BRISCOE HAY
(Pylon)

[UGA art professor] Bob Crocker had this famous 24-hour party when he turned 40. At one point I looked in the room and everybody was dancing jam-packed together, playing something like Q: *Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo!* I got picked up and passed across the room on hands, and I was like, ‘Oh my god. Many hands *do* make light work!’ It was crazy. We had a great combination in the summer: cold keg beer, sprinklers, cheap rent. There were some very creative people, and nothing was purchased—we cut our own hair and made imaginative outfits out of the thrift store.

MICHAEL LACHOWSKI
(Pylon)

People were creative at parties without even being asked. One time I decided to have a party called "Fashion Is Art," and the poster was a clothes hanger with that written inside it. So I hung black plastic and made everyone stand there and have their picture taken. *New York Rocker* magazine was what we [Pylon] wanted to be written up in—that was our quest. And damn if we didn't get written up pretty quickly.

JOHN MARTIN TAYLOR
(writer/photographer)

In February 1977 the B's first performed in front of an audience... I had a t-shirt made at the county fair with an awful airbrush painting of a woman with a bouffant hairdo with "B-52" scrawled across the back. I wore it over a cowhide-print shirt tucked into white drawstring pants I had bought in the Caribbean somewhere; they were tucked into boots. An atrocious sight. Everyone was wearing similar makeshift fashion.

We lived simply... But we also lived wildly, seldom conforming to anyone else's sense of fashion or decorum. We didn't need Halloween as an excuse to dress up... or down.

FRED SCHNEIDER (The B-52's)

A while before Valentine's Day I told people we had a band, which we jammed on because there was nothing to do, and friends agreed to let us play in their living room. And then after that it went well, and other friends said we had to play at their party. [Then] Curtis [Crowe, Pylon's drummer] had a party and we played on his kitchen table. Then after several parties someone said we were as good or better than bands playing Max's [Kansas City, a New York venue famous from the Pop Art to punk eras]. Which didn't mean a lot; lots of bands were better [laughs]. So Keith and Ricky took a tape up there and we played in December 1977 and we felt we'd made it. That was a "wow, we did it" feeling, and then a bigger "wow, they want us back." We were making like \$60, \$80 a week working full-time. We would save up and go to New York and hopefully break even, staying in two rooms in the Iroquois. And we had this opening act, Phyllis [Stapler], doing dance routines to "These Boots Are Made for Walking," which no one had seen in New York. We created our own audience.

FRED SCHNEIDER WITH FRIEND BETTY ALICE FOWLER AT A "BEACH PARTY" AT PYLON PARK.



BELOW AND RIGHT: OF MONTREAL'S KEVIN BARNES



VANESSA BRISCOE HAY
(Pylon)

I knew The Incomparable Phyllis, who opened for The B-52's. I knew her from art school. She worked at the El Dorado, a vegetarian restaurant where several of the B-52's also worked off and on.

BRYAN POOLE (Of Montreal)

If you're in a band in Athens chances are you're probably also in the service industry. So a lot of the time bands get popular locally because the guy washing dishes puts his tracks on, and next thing you know everyone in the restaurant is into it. As a small band you start out playing for other bands, trying to get your friends to play your records at their parties. In Athens the underground places, the warehouse shows, are where it's always been at.

MICHAEL LACHOWSKI (Pylon)

For a while I lived on Barber Street in this area people started to call Pylon Park. During any time there were at least two members of the group living there, plus an adjacent lot to the side. And we'd run power out from the house for my quadraphonic stereo, since we didn't own a PA system. We'd spend the whole day

putting up four-foot fluorescent light fixtures in the tree branches and against the trunks, sometimes setting up props, like stretch plastics and things. That predates when people went to see the bands, even though we were in bands. People would bring records, like when *Computer World* by Kraftwerk came out. Approaching this scene—sort of in the trees, with people and fluorescent lights—and hearing an album like that for the first time... everything really felt new. The mix of energy and music and ideas [came] together into a scene where everyone felt just as important as everyone else, [everyone was] sort of the star.

VANESSA BRISCOE HAY (Pylon)

I never imagined being in a band, I just kind of fell into it. I hadn't had any fantasies about it. I thought I was going to be an art teacher. The guys started playing together, and I had worked with Michael at DuPont [Textiles], and we'd all gone to parties together. Then one day they suggested I audition for the band. I showed up and Michael had a nice binder of lyrics and a microphone for me, and I tried to make the lyrics fit the music. None of us had a preconceived notion of how we'd do it. I think [Pylon guitarist] Randy [Bewley] and Michael got their initial stuff at yard sales and pawnshops just to try something new. Everyone thinks dinky old stuff is worth something after *Antiques Roadshow*, but you could get good stuff then for \$10. You could become a musician the day you decided to be. At our practices, we were always looking for different ways to be a band—once we had a practice in the dark and the guitarist and bassist had little headlamps.

MICHAEL LACHOWSKI (Pylon)

A lot of that kind of overly played-up idea of people being naive about bring musicians is undeniably a crucial part of that scene. Most truly did not know how to be in a band. Pylon was definitely like that, starting extremely tentatively with our instruments. But we were bold and certain... The experiment was trying to figure out what to do, and by the time we were performing, that experiment was our song. It was all part of the transition—going to houses, playing records 'til the band gathers in the kitchen.

FRED SCHNEIDER (The B-52's)

Things were almost post-punk, pre-New Wave, but mostly everyone made music you could dance to because we were playing for our friends, and all our friends loved to groove.

DANNY BEARD (DB Records)

This scene, which to me includes both Athens and Atlanta bands [such as early B-52's supporters The Fans], started from the way The B-52's were, meaning there was no jealousy shown. Everybody helped each other. I think it has to do with being Southern, and good people. But in general some of the success in the scene had to do with the support coming from a good atmosphere between the clubs and labels, and especially between the bands.

I first saw Pylon with Kate [Pierson, from The B-52's]; she knew Vanessa and strongly suggested I go to their show. I saw them at a party at my friend Neal McArthur's house, and really thought they were great. Some





CINDY, KEITH, AND RICKY OF THE B-52'S [FAR RIGHT] AT A HOUSE PARTY.

bands needed to work into being really good, whereas The B-52's were great the first time they played, and Pylon was the same.

BRYAN POOLE (Of Montreal)

When I arrived [in 1989] there was still a glut of bands trying to cop off of R.E.M.—being a jangle-rock rip-off band to ride the golden money trail. It became a little depressing to people locally, because R.E.M. is great, but the best bands do their own thing. So after that the scene needed to rejuvenate, and that came through the Elephant 6 and Kindercore labels—through a bunch of kids just happy to get out of their parents' house to smoke pot and make music, looking for that Technicolor innocence of pop music from before 1966 and also listening to Stockhausen and putting it all on four-track. All these other state schools in the South, you all wonder why they didn't have the same scene. But I think it had to do with having such a big art school with students who care to be crazy and create their own little worlds.

KEVIN BARNES (Of Montreal)

When I first moved here there was no real hope of breaking through, as the eyes of the world weren't on Athens. But it helps you to be in a supportive environment; being around bands that have put out records and toured can help you be more comfortable on stage. It was kind of an anti-celebrity

scene. Olivia Tremor Control never wanted their faces in their photos. Neutral Milk Hotel wasn't promoting on a commercial level. You could do some cool theatrical stuff but not worry about being a cartoon. I had these big-brother figures; it helped me realize what I had to do to make this work as a career.

Around 1998-1999 we all started having potluck dinners every week, and we'd bring something simple we cooked and we'd share music and books and films. It was so inspiring, almost like an education for me. It was people in bands plus their girlfriends, and the girlfriends were also in groups like Dixie Blood Mustache. Basically, they were performance art... They'd do stuff like hang cymbals from the ceiling, create visual atmospheres, create weird little rooms you'd go into. They created this Chinese Dragon that you'd get in and move around and bang in. I think everyone was really influenced by The Art Ensemble of Chicago and Sun Ra, infusing that into indie rock. Mostly, though, everyone was really into psychedelic pop music, and that was the binding force. We tried to discover these lost classics, put them on and blow minds, have something to freak out on for a week.



VANESSA BRISCOE HAY (Pylon)

Downtown [in the late '70s/early '80s] was pretty empty, and there was always the same nice old policeman down there, constantly giving us warnings but letting us go. Once there were these girls in the street dancing in go-go boots on top of a convertible, and as I walked by one of them shouted to me, "We're making history!" And I said, "Wow, what a place to make it!" But in a way they *were* making history on that car, and it's a fond memory for them. We all made a little history in places we never expected to.

MICHAEL LACHOWSKI (Pylon)

Vanessa and I were just both panelists on a discussion at AthFest after a showing of [1987 documentary] *Athens, GA-Inside/Out*, and the questions were along the lines of "Compare the scene then to earlier or now." Ort [owner of Ort's Oldies record store] was also on the panel, and he described a concept he called the Ort Fulcrum or something. Basically, the concept is that if things are tipping this one way then everything can be really fun, but it doesn't have to be what might commercially be considered good (like the early period). And tipped the other way, everything might be good to further success, it just might not be fun. And a lot of us on the panel tended to agree—it's shifted back away from that period where commercial success is an important goal; that tendency of good but not fun has subsided. We feel it's more collective, and people are supporting music for the love of making it again.

John Martin Taylor is a writer, photographer, cookbook author, stone-ground corn connoisseur, and friend of The B-52's. His quotes are reprinted with permission, and his complete memoirs can be viewed on his blog, hoppinjohns.net

Fred Schneider has been a band frontman since the Africanized "killer" bee scare of the mid-'70s. It started as a hobby, a way to bring Fellini and Mancini to the sleepy Classic City, something to do after cocktails at a Chinese restaurant. An immediate hit from the Peach State to the Big Apple, that lark—named The B-52's—helped set the initial Athens music scene in motion. myspace.com/theb52s

Vanessa Briscoe Hay, vocals, and **Michael Lachowski**, bass, play alongside drummer Curtis Crowe and guitarist Randy Bewley in Pylon, a band that's had its own custom Lachowski-designed typeface since forming in 1978 (exactly one year after The B-52's' first show). The group took a hiatus between 1984-1988 and another between 1991-2004, but still managed to tour with The B-52's, Gang of Four, U2, and R.E.M., among others. The first incarnation of the 40 Watt, Athens' renowned live venue, was originally Pylon's practice space. During the second Pylon hiatus, Lachowski was a local electro boogie DJ, dance culture promoter, and seller of vinyl and DJ supplies. myspace.com/wearepylon

Danny Beard graduated from the University of Georgia and co-founded Wax 'N Facts Records in Atlanta in 1976. From 1982-1984 he had a "junior" branch in Athens, co-managed by Michael Lachowski. Beard's DB Records also holds the distinction of having put out the debut singles by both The B-52's (1978's "Rock Lobster" b/w "52 Girls") and Pylon (1980's "Cool" b/w "Dub"), among several other local acts.

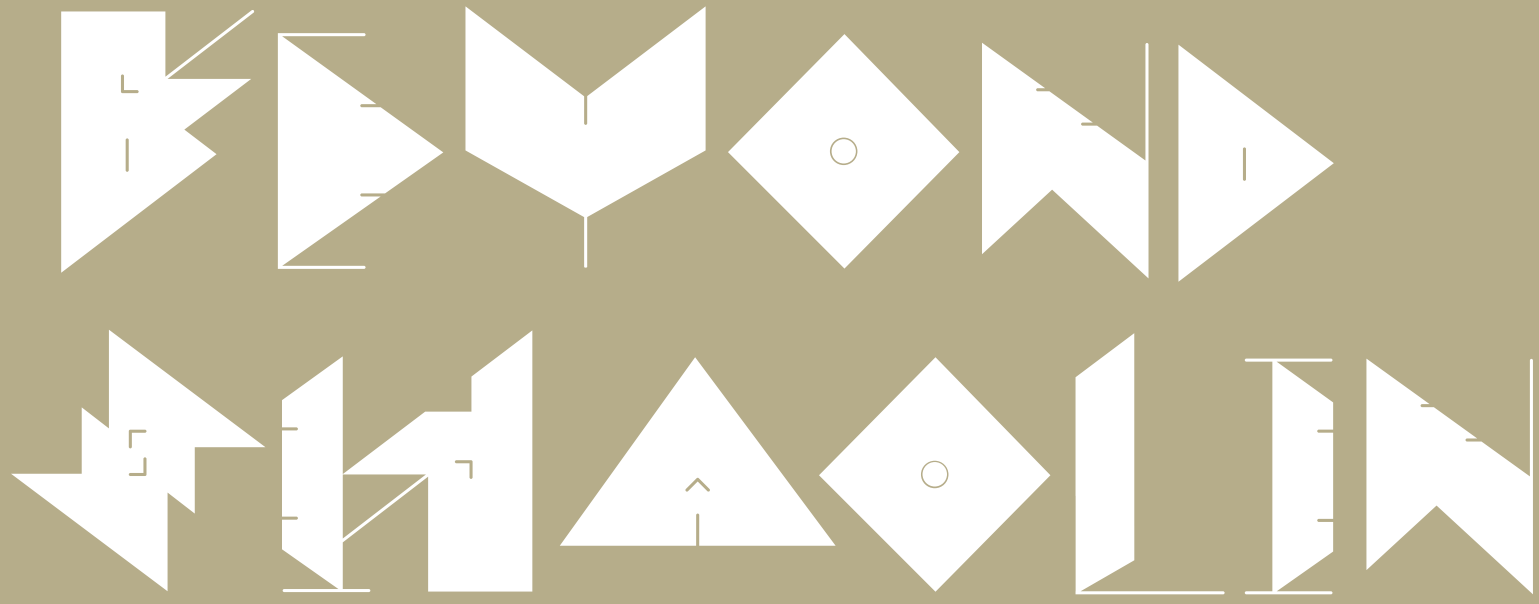
Bryan Poole and **Kevin Barnes** play together in Of Montreal, alongside Dottie Alexander, James Huggins, Davey Pierce, and Ahmed Ghallab. Poole moved to Athens in 1989, and may or may not have been at the first show of Pylon's first reunion. However, he

KEVIN BARNES (Of Montreal)

Basically, we played a ton of shows—hundreds—and probably 90 percent did nothing to make us want to continue making music and touring. But we found moments of affirmation, even on albums that didn't sell well. Working with other musicians, working with my brother on the album artwork, figuring out what to do with it all on the stage—the creative process is very rewarding, sharing it is fulfilling. And the touring has reached that level. For [our new album,] *Skeletal Lamping*, we can create a communal experience where likeminded people all dress up in our freak scene each night like I always wanted.

definitely bought Michael Lachowski's tuner at Pylon's "Going Out of Business Sale" in 1991. Along with Of Montreal, Poole has played bass in Elf Power and an ESG cover band, Dark Meat, with more surely to come. Barnes moved to Athens in 1997 following a brief cruel stint in Minneapolis. He's been prolific ever since, surviving the Elephant 6 shadow and Kindercore Records collapse to become the Purple One of the Southeast, self-recording a kinky frenzy of basslines in his computer. Of Montreal's *Skeletal Lamping* is out in October on Polyvinyl. ofmontreal.net

To see clips from *Athens, GA-Inside/Out* and early concert footage of Athens bands, visit XLR8R.com/120extras.



WU-TANG VISIONARY **RZA** CONTEMPLATES
A MORE SOLITARY FUTURE.



WORDS MATTHEW NEWTON PHOTOS JOSH MCNEY

It's mid-afternoon in Los Angeles on an unusually cool Saturday in June. Robert Diggs, the RZA, is darting around town, cell phone pressed to his ear, running numerous errands before he sets off next week on a North American tour that will take him through 20 cities in about as many days. The tall and wiry MC/producer, whose lauded and often-imitated production style helped to redefine hip-hop in the early 1990s, has overseen the Wu-Tang Clan dynasty for over 15 years—through success, tragedy, and its fair share of tribulation.

SNACKS & ATTACKS

On tour, RZA will unveil the latest incarnation of his storied Bobby Digital character, an alter ego he introduced to listeners a decade ago with *Bobby Digital in Stereo*. Approached as a concept album—one that found the Staten Island rapper espousing lurid tales of sex, violence, and ghetto life from the perspective of a devious and somewhat misogynistic hero—*In Stereo* was released at a time when the Wu-Tang brand was still fairly untarnished. Once-smitten critics hadn't yet begun leveling claims that the nine-member crew and its extended family were over-saturating the market with releases. It was a different era.

Since then much has changed in the 39-year-old RZA's personal and professional life. In 2000, his mother passed away. Four years later his cousin and founding Wu-Tang Clan member Russell Jones—Ol' Dirty Bastard—died of an apparent drug overdose in a New York City recording studio. And late last year, rumors of internal strife among Wu-Tang Clan members surfaced while promoting *8 Diagrams*—the group's first album since 2001's *Iron Flag*.

"The *8 Diagrams* campaign was kinda sour," RZA admits, the sound of L.A. traffic swelling in the background. "I was called a few bad names by my own crew. So I felt like, 'Hold on, man, I'm a master of hip-hop. I helped bring this hip-hop generation to where it is.' And for people to just put me to the side like that, I'm not going for that shit."

That shit is complicated. Last year, during a video interview, Raekwon claimed that RZA was withholding money from the



“I ACTUALLY WAS AGAINST THE PROGRESSION OF MUSIC, AND NOW IT’S LIKE, MAN, SOMETIMES I BE MAKING SOME REAL UNIQUE-SOUNDING SHIT.”

group—a charge that RZA categorically denied when questioned about it several days later on Tim Westwood’s U.K.-based radio show. Adding to the drama, Raekwon criticized RZA’s production on *8 Diagrams*. In a separate interview, Ghostface Killah then voiced his disapproval of the production on the album, suggesting that the Clan should have enlisted Pharrell or perhaps Timbaland to produce a couple tracks. Official word is that no lingering rift exists. But today, as RZA recounts the episode, it still seems to weigh heavily on his mind.

When the conversation shifts to the topic of *Digi Snacks*—the third Bobby Digital album—RZA’s mood lightens. He reports that last night he completed mastering the album and that, when the tour is over, he’ll begin work on scoring the second season of *Afro-Samurai*. The latter pursuit, RZA’s burgeoning career as a film composer, is what initially prompted his relocation to Los Angeles back in 2000. While he still maintains residence in New York, Hollywood has been demanding more of his time—both as a composer and, more recently, as an actor. With supporting roles in films like *American Gangster* and *Derailed*, as well as the forthcoming *Repossession Mambo* and *Life Is Hot in Cracktown*, RZA has continued to expand the scope of his creative work.

BEAT STREET

“I started hip-hop as an MC first, taught by the GZA,” RZA says. “But when it came to producing, we used to always have to go to different producers’ houses, whether we were trying to catch up with Marley Marl, D/R Period, or EZ Moe Bee. They all was good producers, but I felt like they wasn’t MCs, so they wasn’t making a beat you can rap to. They was making beats you could party to and dance to.”

After his first hip-hop group, Force of the Imperial Master (with GZA and ODB), disbanded in the late 1980s, RZA says he was determined to learn production. “My manager at the time didn’t really believe me when I told him I wanted to make beats,” he says. “So I gave him \$500 and was like, ‘Yo, can you help me get a machine?’ He was like, ‘Well, that’s not enough to buy a machine, but you can rent one.’ So I rented an SP1200 [sampler and] a Yamaha four-track and started making my own beats.”

While learning production, RZA landed a deal with Tommy Boy Records. The resulting EP, 1991’s *Ooh I Love You Rakeem*, was released under the name Prince Rakeem. In the video for the single “Ooh We Love You Rakeem,” a fresh-faced 22-year-old RZA is surrounded by women vying for his love and attention. Produced with the help of Prince Paul, the track channeled the tongue-in-cheek vibe of Biz Markie or Del tha Funkee Homosapien’s *I Wish My Brother George Was Here*. But there was also a darker, more theatrical undercurrent at play.

“[Then] I wound up getting into trouble,” RZA says, referring to a brief jail sentence for a felony. “I had to go stay in the streets [for awhile] to survive and shit, and I was going back and forth between Pittsburgh, Ohio,

and New York.” Poverty in New York was taking its toll on his mother, RZA recounts. So she relocated with the family to Steubenville, Ohio, where his brothers and sisters lived with his stepdad. RZA was already on his own by this time, but he and Ghostface and ODB kept an apartment in the projects in Steubenville. This is when RZA was cutting his teeth in production, accumulating more gear and learning to use it. Already versed in the SP1200, RZA soon discovered the Ensoniq EPS keyboard and then the ASR-10.

“That was the Wu foundation,” he says of the EPS and ASR-10. “We started making a lot more demos, just the three of us in Ohio. Then in 1992, we moved back to New York, got with the rest of our [Brownsville] crew that we grew up with. Then the Wu-Tang style was born.”

HIP-HOP & BEYOND

“What keeps me interested now is the power of a musician,” says RZA. “Before, especially the style of music on *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*, I had no musical knowledge of what I was doing. I just had sound and DJ rhythm—cuttin’ up this and puttin’ a scratch here and takin’ a break there. Now, what keeps me interested in [production] is that I know all the DJ techniques but now I’m [also] a musician.”

RZA’s experience and background in music theory has become evident in his work. Take the much-hyped Beatles interpolation, “The Heart Gently Weeps,” from *8 Diagrams*. The production is polished, sophisticated, even melodic—worlds apart from the raw aesthetic RZA captured on *36 Chambers*. Raekwon’s and Ghostface’s opening verses on the track still evoke the classic Wu-Tang vocal cadence, but the backdrop has changed dramatically. Maybe it’s here that the creative rift is most striking. RZA views his production as an evolutionary process, whether it’s a film composition or the latest Wu-Tang album. But perhaps the most vocal dissenters in his crew—Raekwon and Ghostface—believe the Clan should remain true to its original vision. It’s a crossroads that so many musical collaborators have faced. And while all the remaining Wu members are legendary MCs, RZA is the only one who seems intent on finding something greater than what hip-hop can offer.

“When you [listen] to the new Bobby Digital album, you hear this hip-hop sound but it also seems elevated,” RZA explains. “You hear live guitar, guitar solos coming in at the end, different things that I incorporated into my production that I probably wouldn’t’a did years ago. Then I wasn’t a musician. I didn’t understand the progression of music and how it should be. I actually was *against* the progression of music. And now it’s like, man, sometimes I be making some real unique-sounding shit. Whether the world hears it or not, I know that when I be in my crib sometimes I’m like, ‘What the fuck is this?’”

RZA as Bobby Digital’s *Digi Snacks* is out now on Koch Records. myspace.com/rza



□ BOBBY SAYS

With *Digi Snacks*, RZA reveals the third chapter in the ever-changing world of Bobby Digital. In his own words, the Wu-Tang Clan MC/producer explains what his thinly veiled alter ego is thinking.

“LONGTIME COMING”

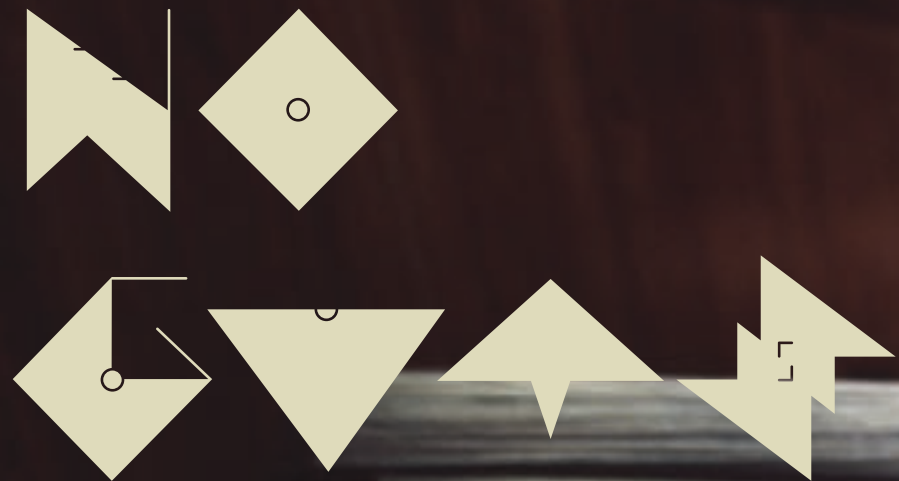
When I started writing [lyrics to this] song, the hook was sayin’ that today could be your dying day. And sometimes I feel like it’s my last day in the world but then it turns out to be my best day in the world, or a whole new career starts. Or sometimes I feel like I’m ‘bout to lose, and then next thing you know I’m winnin’. Let’s take that song and say it’s been a long time coming for me to make a new change in my life, to improve myself.

“YOU CAN’T STOP ME NOW”

This is a very ego-driven song—my way of tellin’ you I started from the bottom, I didn’t start from the top of this shit. I’m a high-school dropout. Me and Ghost was fuckin’ thinking about robbing Brinks trucks [back in the day], that’s how bad it was, man. But here we are. Wu-Tang made it to the top, and that’s my foundation. But here I am also steppin’ out on my own, and I won’t be stopped at nothing I do—whether I make another album, whether I make movies... That’s my anthem right now. That should be the anthem for any ambitious man.

“CREEP”

[This track] is just really on some L.A. gangster shit, to be honest. You know, Black Knights and Doc Doom, these are all ex-gangbangers and shit. And I got my boy King Tech, from the *Sway and Tech Wake-UP Show*, he produced the track for me. He produced a track on the first two Bobby Digital albums as a matter of fact. So I said, ‘Give me a track for my new album, baby.’ He gave me two and this one stuck out. And I went and got my girl Thea to do the hook, and I went and got the Black Knights to make it a fuckin’ tough song. I think it’s a good blend of the East Coast/West Coast sound—both coasts are really rockin’ it.



MEMPHIS GARAGE-PUNK
●
JAY REATARD ON GROWING UP ANGRY.



“I’m not going to be one of those people who will try to sell it to you like, ‘I’m a realist.’ I’m fucking negative,” Jay Reatard says on the phone from his native Memphis. “I have fun like the next guy, and I do normal things, but I usually hate it.”

Audibly out-of-breath, Jay’s taking a walk to cool down after an impromptu band practice. Despite such blunt pessimism, he’s upbeat. Well-spoken. Even nice. This is a little surprising, given his 15-year reputation for confrontational live performances (including recently punching a heckling fan in the face in Toronto) and hopeless, death-obsessed punk anthems.

“There’s really nothing else in the world that conjures up any sort of ambition in me,” he explains. “If I wasn’t playing music, I think I’d probably be living with my mom and be 300 pounds, chugging Mountain Dew and eating fucking Taco Bell all day on the couch. I’d be like Daniel Johnston... minus the music.”

MEMPHIS IS DEAD

Reatard, born Jay Lindsey, was eight years old when his family first moved to Memphis. Their housing plans fell through, and they were cooped up in a shitty hotel for a few weeks. One night, Jay was playing in the bathroom and stabbed himself with a junkie’s needle he found under the sink. “My first Memphis memory is being rushed to the hospital for an AIDS test,” he offers.

A shaky relationship with his alcoholic father and evil stepmother (whom he describes affectionately as “that fucking beast of a woman”) led Jay to often lock himself in a walk-in closet, where he would sing melodies into a handheld tape recorder. One day, he found a nylon-string classical guitar and taught himself to play. At the age

of 15, he ditched high school to pursue music full-time. Since then, he has released 19 full-length LPs and over 50 singles with his various projects, including the drunken, aggressive garage-punk band The Reatards, the haunted macabre-rock outfit The Lost Sounds, and the solo bedroom No Wave side-gig Terror Visions.

“My awkward high-school photographs are records, because I didn’t go to high school. [Making records is] what I did when I should have been [in class],” he explains, thus shedding light on enraged album titles like 1998’s *Teenage Hate*, 1999’s *Grown Up, Fucked Up*, and 2007’s *World of Shit*.

DEATH IS FORMING

Though he’s been prolific since the late ’90s, it’s Reatard’s recent solo work that’s garnered the most attention. Beginning with the *Hammer I Miss You 7*”, he spent the whole of 2006 working on *Blood Visions*, his solo debut. The album documents intense life transitions: coming out of a six-year relationship, quitting The Lost Sounds, and moving into a friend’s spare bedroom. “I just sat in the bedroom of this girl’s apartment and wrote the entire album in a couple of sittings,” Jay explains. “I was in a really, really bad place in my life, and that’s where the inspiration was coming from.” This is echoed in *Blood Visions*’ nihilistic songs about friends and family, with repeated choruses like “All these places mean nothing to me” and “Death is forming.”

The results were unparalleled, and *Blood Visions* surpassed Reatard’s previous efforts.

Filled with rusty guitar hooks and Reatard’s frantic, almost paranoid vocals, the record paired his signature garage punk with newfound songwriting maturity. Released in October of 2006, it nonetheless went relatively unnoticed for a while due to scant promotion and Reatard’s reluctance to pursue a solo career. “I still thought [the record] was crap when I turned it in [to L.A. label In the Red Records],” he admits. “I never had any thoughts about it except, ‘Oh my God, I made a solo record. Who the hell do I think I am?’”

Blood Visions quietly built momentum, and by mid-2007 Jay Reatard was touring internationally, selling out medium-sized venues, and becoming a shit-hot commodity with the major-label A&R sharks, some of whom were none too subtle in their intent to capitalize on Reatard’s fresh-meat status. “One guy was like, ‘Hey man, don’t be that girl. You know, you’re at the fuck party in college and it’s the girl you bring home and have sex with. Then she gets that look in her eye, and she calls you too much,’” Jay recalls with disbelief. “Right from the get-go, there it is: a major label making an analogy of fucking you.”

ALWAYS WANTING MORE

Eventually, Jay found kindred spirits at Matador Records and signed with them over a bottle of wine in their New York office. As always, the jump to a bigger label has brought its share of backlash from the DIY punk community. “I got death via MySpace from some serious creeps, but good riddance man,”



“MY FIRST MEMPHIS MEMORY IS BEING RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL FOR AN AIDS TEST.”



"MY AWKWARD HIGH-SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS ARE RECORDS,
BECAUSE I DIDN'T GO TO HIGH SCHOOL."



he says. "I've worked so hard my entire life to the point where, if I release an album that's going to get properly worked, it's not a big deal."

Jay's distaste for indie rock's needless elitism stems from his own musical upbringing. "Not everybody can be so cool as to read the hippest fuckin' blog or whatever," he rants. "Some people live in the middle of nowhere and still go to the grocery store to buy a magazine off of the rack. That's where I learned about new music initially."

Jay kicked off his contract by releasing six new 7" singles over the course of 2008. While they retain his old material's snarling, bad-ass style, the new songs are slightly less vicious, built on acoustic guitars and thought-out melodies. "I can only imagine how Danny Bonaduce must feel. That guy's got to be this cute little redheaded bass player in The Partridge Family for his whole life," he explains. "It's kind of the opposite effect with me: I'm not allowed to *not* be a creepy little shithead any more."

GROWN UP, FUCKED UP

While Jay figures out how to navigate his way above ground, he's also consumed with adding the right finishing touches to his upcoming full-length, due for an early 2009 release. "People say it's contrived to over-think how a record sounds, but it's just like picking fucking colors for a painting," he explains. "Anyone that says it pours out and the song just ends up how it is... is either a fucking liar or not a songwriter to begin with."

If *Blood Visions'* unexpected success is any indicator, Jay's new album could blow up in a heartbeat, but that's the last of this Memphis punk's concerns. "I'm only truly content with life when I'm singing about dead people," he says, adding that music is his true love. "I've been through a lot of things—the last thing I'm afraid of is being in a popular band."

Jay Reatard's *Singles 06-07* (In the Red) and a compilation of his 7" split singles (Matador) are out now.
jayreatard.blogspot.com, myspace.com/jayreatard



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LIVE AND KICKING Jay Reatard talks about the sneakers he must have on tour.



NIKE SB MONEY CAT HIGH-TOPS

The ones I can't ever go on tour without are these Nike SB Money Cat high-tops. They were the first shoes I ever bought where I spent \$180 and felt really stupid. But they are actually the most comfortable shoes I've ever had, so it kind of made sense.



ALIFE EVERYBODY HIGH ITALIA PATENT SNEAKERS

These are most ridiculous ones to wear, just because they piss everyone off. They're made of navy blue and bright red patent leather. I like to wear these and go to McDonalds and see what kind of looks I get. They're basically like Ronald McDonald shoes.



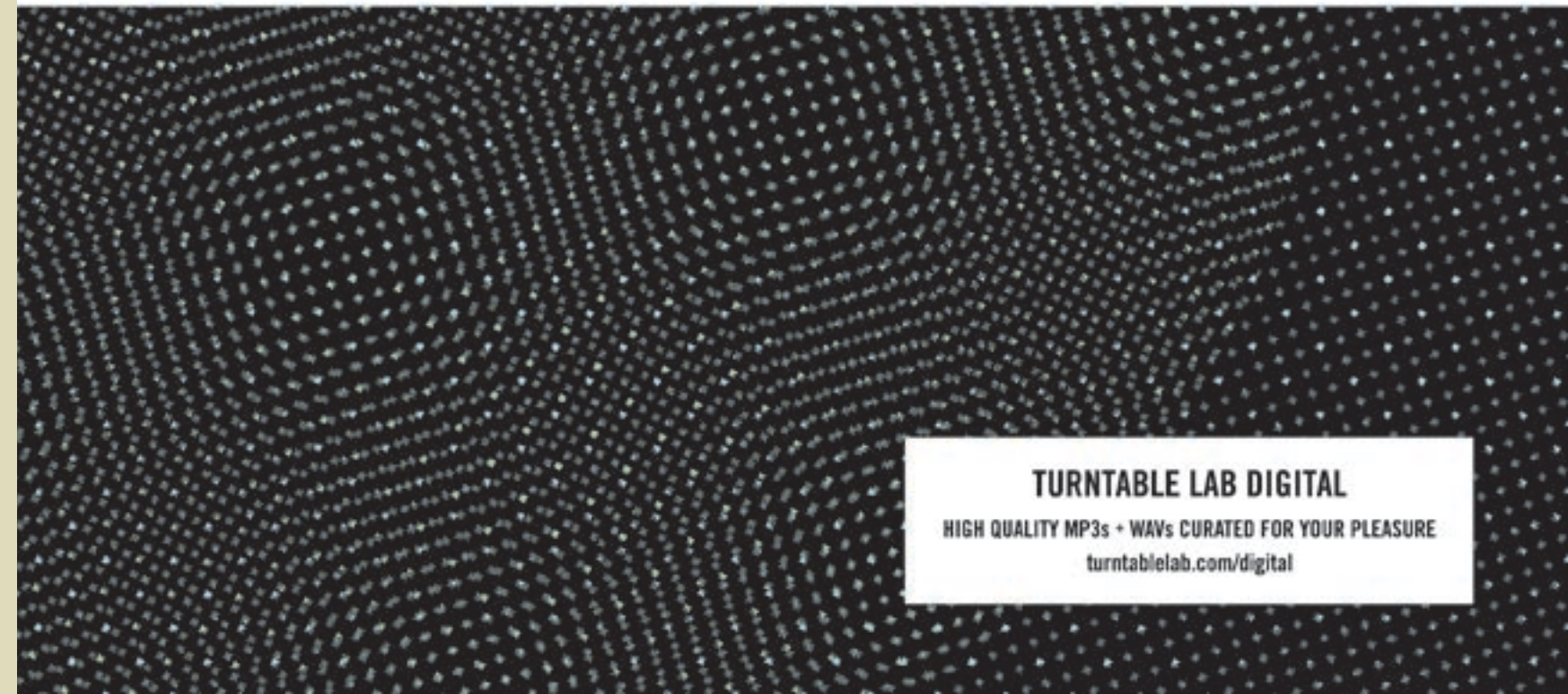
NIKE SB ALLIGATORS

The ones I like the best are the SBs made out of fake alligator skin. They're kind of over-the-top and pretty tacky, but I like wearing really loud shoes because it kind of irritates people, especially punk rockers.



WHITE CONVERSE CHUCK TAYLOR ALL-STARS

I have a pair of Converse All-Stars that I've had for seven years and I refuse to throw away. They smell like vomit. They were white when I was 21, but they're a really weird earthy color now.



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A DISPATCH FROM
THE CRESCENT CITY'S RAP UNDERGROUND.

In the late '90s, New Orleans bounce label Take Fo' signed a record contract with local phenomenon Katey Red, a cross-dressing MC who made the title of The Showboys' "Drag Rap" (the song from which most bounce music samples) seem very literal indeed. While those outside Louisiana struggled to make sense of how an openly gay rapper could not only peacefully coexist, but blow the fuck up, in the often homophobic Southern rap

game, Katey was merely continuing in the N.O. tradition of keeping the party hype. She was damn good at bounce's trademark stuttered and chanted club raps—and so what if sometimes, in between shouting out dance moves and neighborhoods, she would make references to male prostitution and gay sex? The girls loved to dance to it, the guys followed, and, unwittingly, the sissy rap genre was born. These days, nothing can dampen the spirit

in New Orleans clubs like Da Chatroom, Caesar's, and The Venue, where Red, veteran Big Freedia, and Sissy Nobby—whose gritty, impassioned relationship raps have made her the genre's rising star—tear up the dance night after night. Our producer friend Dre Skull was down South when we received this excited missive from him and photographer Ports Bishop about the hype going down in the Big Easy. *Vivian Host*

myspace.com/kateyred, myspace.com/bigfreedia, myspace.com/sissynobby



-- This is the Josephine neighborhood where Freedia is from. (Katey Red is from Melpomene.) You can see these teenage girls in the background—there were actually about 15 of them pretty much hanging out on the corner everyday, playing some card game for money. When Freedia would drive up and play bounce out the window of her car, all the girls would bend over and start bouncing.

Tuesday night at Caesar's in West Bank. It was billed as a mother-daughter routine between Big Freedia and Sissy Nobby; Katey Red just came out for fun. In the club, for the most part, you don't hear rap in verse form; a lot of what you hear is phrases and chants, sometimes their voice is being chopped up as if by a sampler—like "Break it down, breakabreakabreakabreakadown"—but they're doing it live. On stage, Nobby will shake her ass and Freedia will challenge the ladies in the crowd and see if they can compete. It's kind of casual. I mean, the vibe is intense but it's too rowdy to be "serious"—they could never mess up.

(From left: Katey Red, Sissy Nobby, and Big Freedia)



← Sissy Nobby outside her home in Gretna, West Bank; her yellow Mustang is in the background. Nobby, who sometimes refers to herself as Nobbella, is on her ascent right now. She's all over YouTube, and has about a million plays on MySpace, with recent hits like "Break It Down," "Snake," and "Arch in Yo Back."

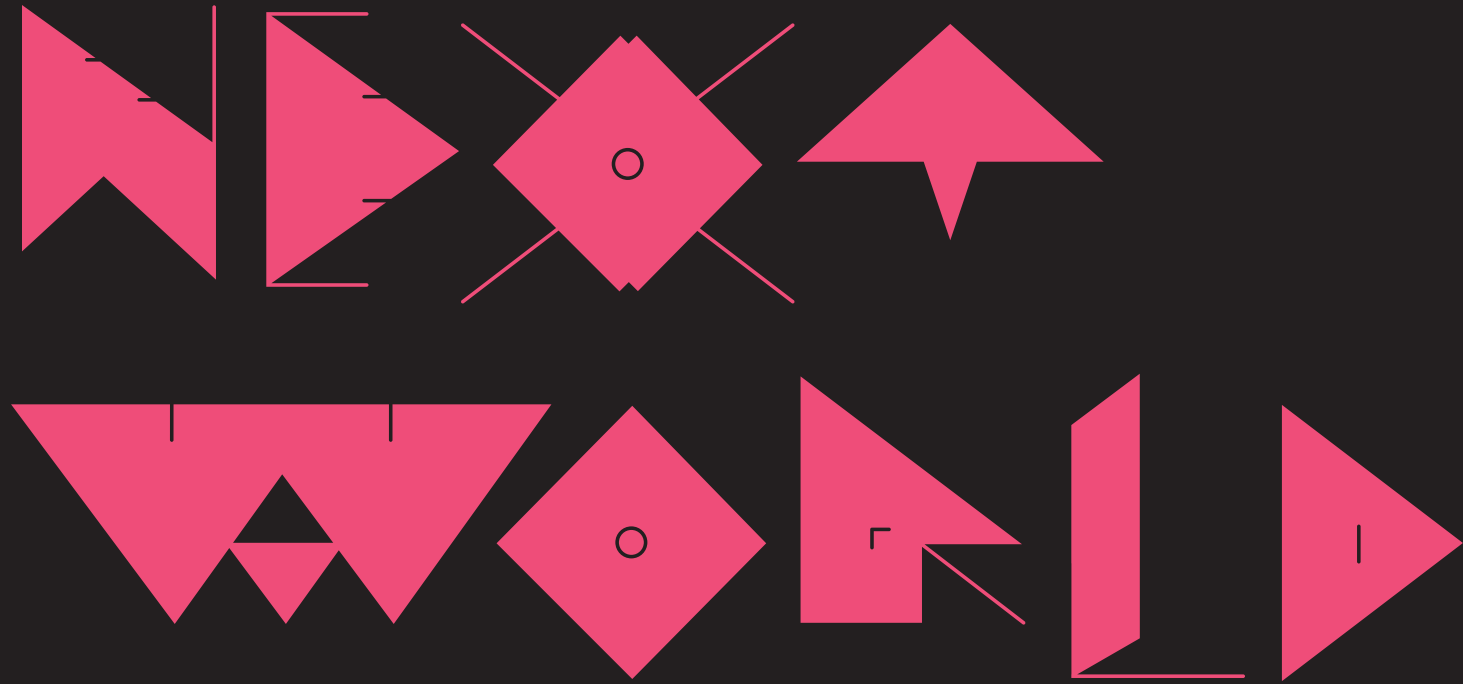
Freedia called and was like, "I want a thug shot." This is in her apartment. If you notice, she's got galoshes on. I kind of felt like it was a post-flood style.



← The Venue and Caesar's both have these big murals that you can pay to get your picture taken in front of. This is Freedia with one of her fans named Precious.

Big Freedia and Katey Red were standing on the corner and a friend of a friend rolled up in this crazy ride. You can't really see it, but the windshield says "Fresh Azimiz," like some shortening of "As I am is." Big Freedia is rocking that military-style scout look that's been hot in New Orleans for a few years.

Tyria wears
bag by [Gecko Traders](#)
from [Flight 001](#),
head piece by [Peggy Noland](#),
leggings worn as head-wrap
by [DimePiece](#),
hair-rings by [Hair'em](#) by [Bijules](#),
collar by [Andrea Crews](#),
and t-shirt by [Cheap Monday](#).



Photographer:

[Suzy Poling](#)

Stylist:

[Liz Baca](#) for [The Goods!](#)

Production assistant:

[Ryan Rodriguez](#)

Make-up & hair:

[Melinda Cazeraz](#)

Models:

[Maddie](#) and [Tyria](#) (Look),

[Gabriel](#) (Ford),

[Justin Kennedy](#)

Post-Production Artwork:

[Official Tourist](#) ([isthatot.com](#)),

[Kamau Amu Patton](#) ([kamau.org](#)),

[Suzy Poling](#) ([suzypoling.com](#))

Special thanks to [The Dark Side](#)

[Initiative \(DSI\)](#), [Static Vintage](#),

[C.C. Rider](#), [Flight 001 SF](#), [Hideo](#)

[Wakamatsu SF](#), and [Samsonite](#)

[Black Label SF](#). All [Cheap Monday](#)

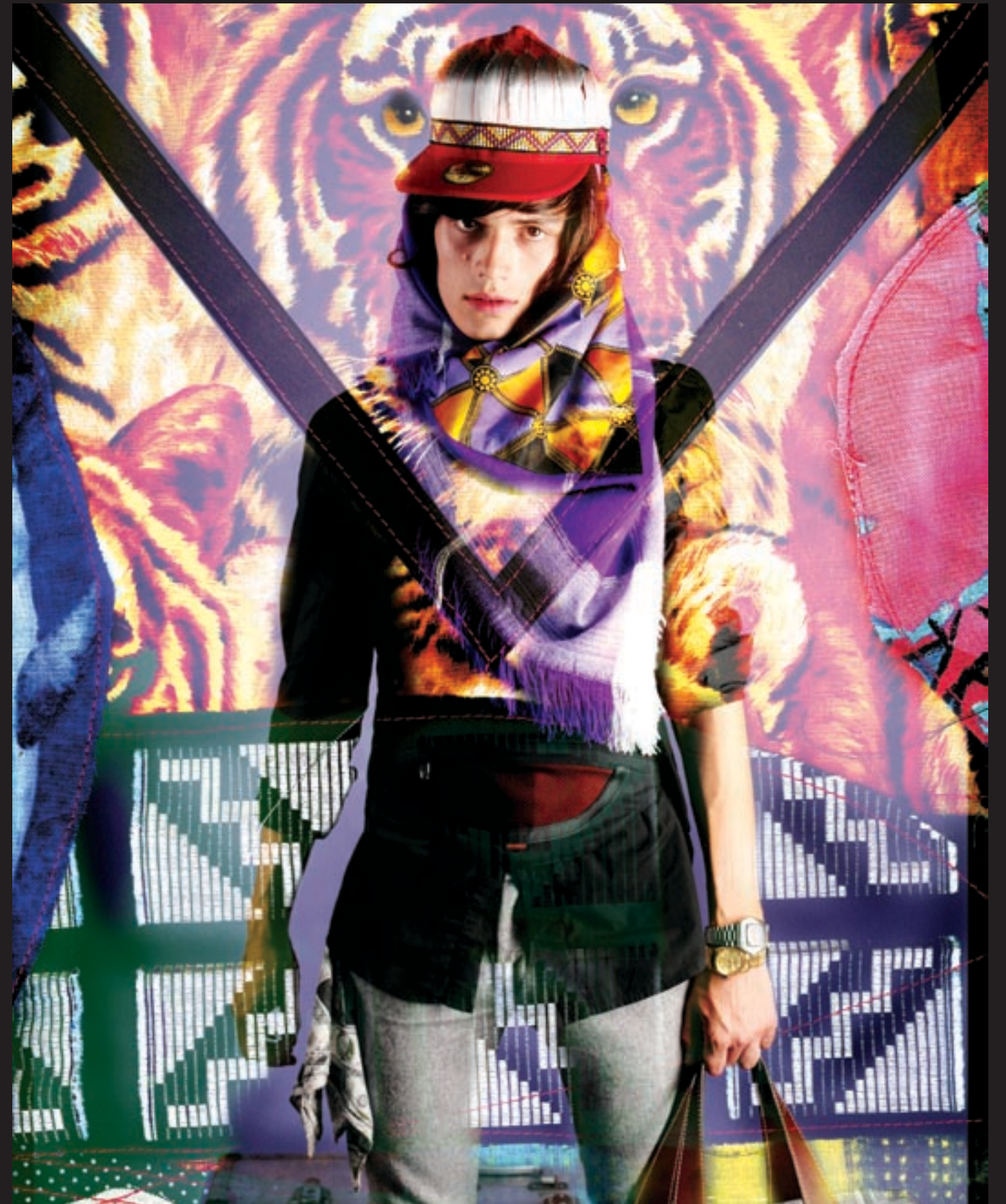
from [C.C. Rider SF](#) and all other

vintage from [The Goods!](#)





Maddie wears
earrings by Fleathers,
necklaces and thread sculpture
by Peggy Noland,
vest by Lilly & Jae,
brooch by Los Dos Diablos,
jeans by Peg Leg NYC,
luggage tag as bracelet
by Flight 001,
and vintage boots
by Charles Jourdan.



Gabriel wears a hat by Maharishi x New Era, scarf by Andrea Crews, top by Nice Collective, vest by Endovanera, waist pack by Samsonite Black Label, pants by Yoko Devereaux, vintage money scarf, bag by Paul Smith from Flight 001, shoes by Nike Jordan.



Maddie wears earrings by [Ambiguous Jewelry](#), top by [Maharishi](#), vest by [Secta](#), dress worn as shirt by [Zachary's Smile White Label](#), thermal pants by [Nice Collective](#), make-up case by [Hideo Wakamatsu](#), and vintage bracelets, belt, and boots.



Gabriel wears a vest and top by [Nice Collective](#), vintage fanny pack by [Lego](#), vintage t-shirt, jeans by [Cheap Monday](#), vintage [Gucci](#) loafers; [Christian Dior](#) suitcase from [Static Vintage](#).

Tyria wears a top with scarf by [Lily & Jae](#), long-sleeve top by [Secta](#), vest by [Endovanera](#), cropped pants by [Popomomo](#), leggings by [Peg Leg NYC](#), waist pack by [Workhorse x RE:Load](#), aluminum bottle by [FL Futura Laboratories](#), vintage head scarf; shoes, tights, and earrings stylist's own.



Justin wears vintage eyeglasses by Alain Mikli, jacket by Nicholas K, t-shirt and umbrella by King Stampede, vintage pants and sandals, socks by P.A.M., and travel tool pack by FL Futura Laboratories from DSI.



Maddie wears jacket by Claw Money, t-shirt by Cheap Monday, vintage shorts by Generra, leggings by DimePiece, vintage shoes by Nike, bag by Wtaps from DSI, and fanny pack, stylist's own.

Justin wears jacket by Maharishi, tank top by Name Ribbon, jeans by Official Tourist, waist pouch by Acronym from DSI, suitcase by Alexander McQueen for Samsonite Black Label, and vintage Gucci loafers from Static Vintage.



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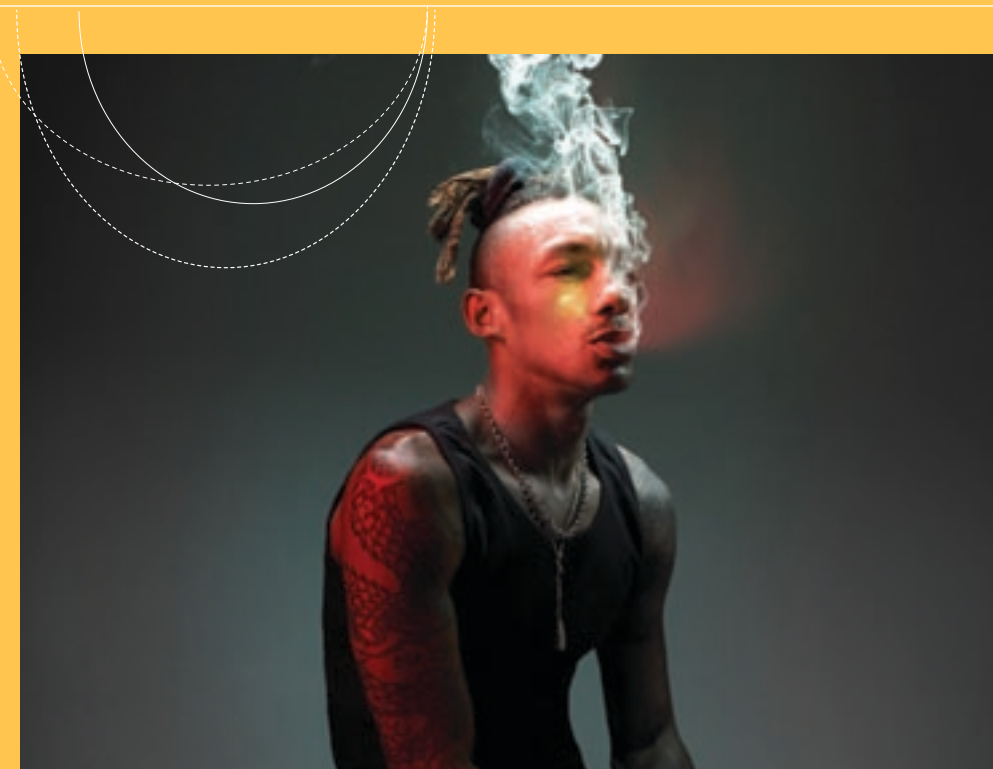
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ALBUM REVIEWS

9/08



TRICKY

Knowle West Boy

Domino/US/CD



SWITCH'S MIDAS TOUCH TURNS TRICKY'S LONG-AWAITED RETURN INTO POST-MILLENNIAL GOLD.

You know the back-story: After spitting rhymes on Massive Attack's historic *Blue Lines* and *Protection* LPs, Bristol-born rudeboy Adrian Thaws (a.k.a. Tricky) goes solo with 1995's brooding, multilayered *Maxinquaye*—the blazingly original trip-hop work that defined an era—to worldwide acclaim. He's anointed a musical prodigy and quickly creates two more very good records in 1996: *Nearly God* (a demos collection) and *Pre-Millennium Tension*, *Maxinquaye*'s proper follow-up. Then things start to go sour... really sour. Over the course of the next decade, Tricky recruits some dubious contributors (um, Live's Ed Kowalczyk?) for a string of mediocre-to-downright bad releases that never approach the quality of his initial recordings.

When it was announced that Tricky would collaborate on his ninth album, *Knowle West Boy*, with hot-shit beatmaker Dave "Switch" Taylor, there was chatter of a triumphant return to form. While that's not quite the case, the good news is that *Knowle West Boy* is at least good—an accomplished record that legitimizes Tricky for new fans and those who abandoned him long ago.

A fairly concise set of tunes (12 tracks at 48 minutes), the album mostly works because of its deft editing and arrangement. Where Tricky used to let his experimental tendencies run wild, haphazardly tossing several genre elements into one track, here we're given a collection of well-thought-out modern pop tunes that explore singular ideas within individual songs. And while much of the credit is due to the artist himself (he's listed as the record's main producer), this new focus likely wouldn't have been possible without Switch's assistance.

Operating in a smaller capacity than he did with M.I.A.'s *Kala*, here Switch plays traditional co-producer, helping rein in Tricky's ideas and sculpting the album's overall sound. Every time *Knowle West Boy* starts to

feel dull or repetitive, like on the minimal, string-driven "Cross to Bear," an unexpected element swoops in—usually in the form of an abstract beat pattern or manipulated vocal tic that is distinctively Switch.

Style-wise, *Knowle West Boy* is all over the map—switching freely between rock, ragga, and downtempo—but manages not to splinter off from the overall pop structure. The first of two Jamaican-inspired cuts is "Bacative," sung by New York-based toaster Rodigan—a nice enough (if a bit tame) number; meanwhile, "Veronika," named for its female singer, offers the album's first innovative moment. Chugging along with bulky bass drums and choppy synths, it also introduces the record's finest three-song stretch—sexy rocker "C'mon Baby" through "Past Mistake," the closest thing to trip-hop on this outing. "Council Estate," though, is *Knowle West Boy*'s true gem: aggressive future rock that gets everything right. Fighting to reclaim past glories, the artist declares, perhaps to himself, "Can't break it/Can't take who you are.../Remember, boy, you're a superstar!"

On most of these tracks, he may be just that, but *Knowle West Boy* is not a perfect record. First, there's the bizarre, throwaway Kylie Minogue cover "Slow" that retains none of the original's slinky sexuality, while introducing some bad rapping too. "Coalition" is fraught with trite lyrics ("The revolution will be televised," etc.) and even worse delivery.

But for those few missteps, it seems Tricky, with Switch's deft hand, has finally rediscovered his gift. *Knowle West Boy* certainly isn't the masterpiece *Maxinquaye* is—he likely won't reach such heights again—but it's the sound of an artist who still has something to offer. Still, we can't help but wonder what might have been if Switch—growing stronger as a traditional producer with every record he touches—was given full rein of the album. *That* might've been a classic. Ah, well. Next time? *Joe Colly*

MUNK

Cloudbuster

Gomma/GER/CD

It's easy to see why Munk's feel-good, eclectic pop-rock pieces have been widely used in European fashion shows and art galleries. These downtempo tunes are the ultimate background music: easy, interesting listens, just short of being totally fluffy. *Cloudbuster* appears more influenced by commercial pop/rock than electronica, and less interested in presenting a cohesive album than sailing through a gamut of styles, from lounge music (the downtempo, jazz-hop "Under Kontrol") to an homage to Peaches (Asia Argento giving spoken-word attitude on "No Milk") to upbeat drag-queen performance tunes (the catchy pop/rock ditty "Live Fast! Die Old!"). Fluffy can sometimes be its own style, too. *Janet Tzou*



PHOTO BY SUZI KAWASAKI

2562

AERIAL

Tectonic/UK/CD

Melding techno and dubstep is not as easy or as natural as some might imagine. Beyond a basic tempo, techno's dominant pulse is fundamentally at odds with dubstep's characteristic stuttering step. Yet *Aerial* manages to fuse the two together seamlessly into a new kind of machine, one whose bass and echoes dip way down low, but whose glistening snares and skipping kick drums only heighten the energy. Recalling traits of Renegade Soundwave more than Stewart Walker on tracks like "Techno Dread" and "Enforcers," 2562 nonetheless clearly has ears for the smallest detail. Tracks such as "Moog Dub" are deep enough to warrant either a night of quiet wonder or an hour of mad dancing. Or perhaps both. *Matt Earp*

31 KNOTS

WORRIED WELL

Polyvinyl/US/CD

Portland trio 31 Knots' musical focus has grown in recent years to encompass wide swaths of modern R&B, Broadway swagger, and electronic experimentalism, which supplements their bedrock of severe, intricate art-rock. *Worried Well* finds the group utilizing its prismatic musical resources to astonishingly varied effect. "Compass Commands" falls somewhere between Gilbert & Sullivan and "Hey Ya," while "Upping the Mandate" glides on a carriage of hand claps and Dr. Dre-worthy synth lines. When all of these elements reach true confluence, as on the spidery, arpeggio-driven "Strange Kicks" and the lovely, elegiac "Opaque/All White," 31 Knots prove themselves one of the most dramatically adept power trios going. *Sam Mickens*

APSE

SPIRIT

ATP/UK/CD

If you thought post-rock had run out of inspiration, this debut album will renew your faith in the maligned genre. *Spirit* is a gorgeous, portentous work, infused with a morose grandeur that's devoid of corn and cloyingness. Singer/guitarist Robert Toher's high voice sometimes recalls that of Sigur Rós' Jónsi Birgisson, but the Connecticut-based Apse's majestic swaths of tom-heavy, clangorous rock more often evoke Savage Republic—if they recorded for Constellation, perhaps. At once spacey and turbulent, eerie and dramatic, *Spirit* repeatedly makes one think that *this* is where Mercury Rev should've gone after *See You on the Other Side*. The aptly titled *Spirit* is heroic and immense, almost too large for the silver screen. *Dave Segal*

AZEDA BOOTH

IN FLESH TONES

Absolutely Kosher/US/CD

Calgary, Alberta is better known for its ties with the oil and beef industries than its indie-rock output, but Azeda Booth is insistent that that will soon change. Helmed by composer Morgan Greenwood, Azeda Booth is a five-piece electronic-pop band who first drew attention with their much-hyped entry in a recent Radiohead remix contest. On *In Flesh Tones*, their debut for Absolutely Kosher, the band pairs crackly electronic tones with midnight indie-pop for a stunning and inspired record. From the quiet drive of "In Red" to a handful of rhythmic instrumentals like opener "Ran," *In Flesh Tones* is a record to be taken seriously, regardless of where it's from. *Josiah Hughes*



COMMON MARKET

TOBACCO ROAD

Hyena-/MassLine/US/CD

It's hard not to compare Common Market to Blue Scholars. After all, both Seattle duos utilize producer Sabzi's talents, resulting in a similarly laidback vibe. Here, Sabzi spends more time on the keys, creating an elegiac atmosphere. But the radical difference is in the MC: While the Scholars' Geologic is easily accessible, Common Market's RA Scion is more complex. Weaving the theme of service and labor throughout, Scion introduces *Tobacco Road*'s central character—the artist as farmer—on the powerful organ-driven opener "Trouble Is," and brings it full circle on the closer, offering an introspective look at his Kentucky upbringing. The star, however, remains Sabzi, whose production will keep heads nodding long after they stop listening to Scion's words. *Zoneil Maharaj*

RAE DAVIS

POSITIVE THINKING!

Exponential/US/CD

Rookie Texan instrumentalist Rae Davis is off to a solid start with his debut, *Positive Thinking!* Despite the exclamation-tinged title, the nine compositions here aren't quite upbeat. Rather, the San Antonio native prefers a chill, jazz-driven take on downtempo. Live bass and horns make for a fresh pairing with the stutter-step drum programming on songs like "This I Dig of You." The tracks do lack a variance in tempo, but Davis switches up his percussive backbone enough to prevent much monotony—this is especially true when his own beat-boxed loops become the basis for his rhythms. *Max Herman*

DEERHOOF

OFFEND MAGGIE

Kill Rock Stars/US/CD

Offend Maggie, the eighth proper full-length album of Deerhoof's career, finds the band illustrating its well-honed virtues with fierce, economical focus. Less stylistically experimental than last year's excellent *Friend Opportunity*, *Offend Maggie* finds the group—enlarged to a quartet with the addition of second guitarist Ed Rodriguez—in purest art-rock form. Their raw power is as effusive as ever—the guitars of "Eaguru Guru" swoop and rake mercilessly while opener "The Tears and Music of Love" finds the group in the stellar, post-"Start Me Up" mode they've refined so eloquently over the years. Roaming from the metaphysically sinister to the abandon of whimsy, *Offend Maggie* is another sterling volume from one of today's greatest working bands. *Sam Mickens*



THE KILLS

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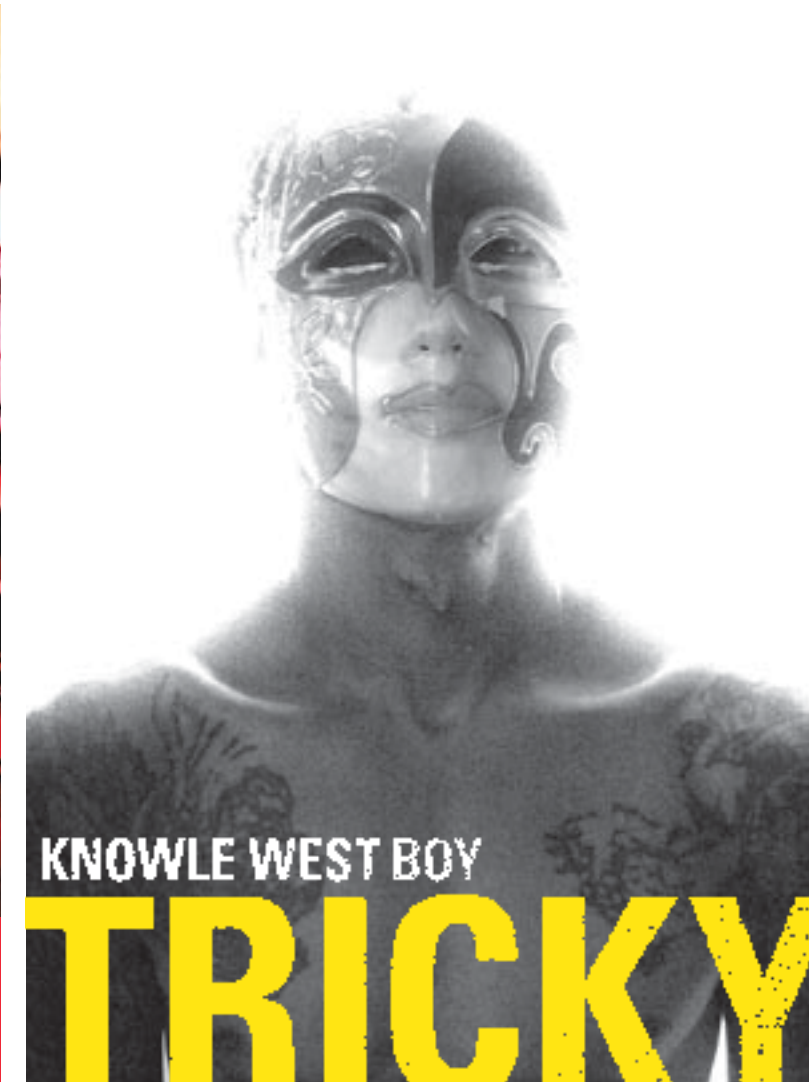
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"*Boom*'s nicotine sting—and the pair's push-me-pull-you chemistry—is still ridiculously sexy." B+ *Entertainment Weekly*

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PHOTO BY JOZZU

SÃO PAULO UNDERGROUND

The Principles of Intrusive Relationships

Aesthetics/US/CD

There is little language available to us to describe Sao Paulo Underground, but here are a few names and words to follow, like breadcrumbs, through this Brazil-via-Chicago collaboration's labyrinth: enveloping, cannibalism, Sun Ra, Black Ark, Tropicalia, Duchamp, maximalism. SPU's music invites entrance, but not participation: This is undanceable samba, sonic-cave sculpture that requires spelunking to discover that inner rhythm. But that's the other key to SPU—search, and ye *shall* find. Inside "Barulho de Ponteiro," for example, there is the sound of a new Brazil—one of rhythms and melodies that swirl and consume themselves. And the junk-band free-Tropicalia of "Pulmoes" *does* reveal a veiled samba inside its aesthetic anarchy. This is stunning music to be deciphered and, eventually, reveled in—but, just like the Minotaur's lair they invoke, enter at your own risk. *Justin Hopper*

DJ SPOOKY SOUND UNBOUND

Sub Rosa/BEL/CD

In the liner notes to his latest mix, DJ Spooky writes: "Today, for me, music isn't music anymore—it's information." Thus his second shot at remixing the diverse Sub Rosa catalog—the first resulted in 2004's *Rhythm Science*—is, appropriately enough, a sort of novel in musical form. Taking a collage of heavy and heady audio bytes from Allen Ginsberg, Gertrude Stein, William Burroughs, and James Joyce, Spooky drops them into a sonic mosaic constructed by John Cage, Bill Laswell, Edgard Varèse, and many others. Spooky is a philosopher of sound; this is not a mix you can put on without paying keen attention. Fortunately these 45 diced-up tracks merit an in-depth exploration. *Derek Beres*

DWELE SKETCHES OF A MAN

Koch/US/CD

MySpace and YouTube references aside, Dwele seems like a throwback to Marvin Gaye's and Bobby Womack's days, a time when R&B was about feelings, not choreography and AutoTune software. On *Sketches of a Man*, he traverses a wide range of emotional geography, from break-up songs ("Free as a Bird") to philandering songs ("I'm Cheatin'") to party songs ("Feels So Good") to good ol' romance songs ("Love Ultra"). On "A Few Good Reasons," he declares, "Got me outside with no umbrella and it's raining/But I don't mind the wetness/It's cool!" The Detroit urban soul man's sound has already survived the "neo-" tag; *Sketches of a Man* makes it clear his longevity relies more on talent than trendiness. *Eric K. Arnold*

GIRL TALK FEED THE ANIMALS

Illegal Art/US/CD

Calling Girl Talk's Gregg Gillis a "mash-up DJ" is a little like saying that Pablo Picasso liked to paint. Girl Talk's aural kaleidoscopes churn through samples at such a dizzying speed that *Feed the Animals* sounds like an all-night dance party crammed into 54 minutes. The juxtapositions are sometimes intentionally absurd, as when he segues from Eminem to Yael Naim's "New Soul" (that Feist rip-off from the Apple AirBook ads). More often—as when he crams snippets of Big Country, Kraftwerk, Hot Chip, The Cardigans, "Planet Rock," and "Whoomp! (There It Is)" into one dizzying 30-second sequence—it's just some of the best party-starting music ever engineered. *Andy Hermann*

JEAN GRAE JEANIUS

Blacksmith/US/CD

Jean Grae's underground credentials are as rock-solid as they come, and not just because she releases new material less frequently than some rappers who have supposedly retired. *Jeanius*, her heavily anticipated (and bootlegged) collaboration with producer 9th Wonder, arrives after years of delays and setbacks, and while it would be nice to hail it as an underdog masterpiece, it's really just quality backpacker hip-hop. Grae's flow is impeccable, and on those rare moments when she sounds like she's having fun, her charisma shines through. But 9th's Little Brother and Justus League cohorts upstage her on grittier numbers like "Smashmouth" and "American Pimp," the album's highlights. Grae's moment will come, but this isn't it. *Andy Hermann*

GROUPEUR DRAGGING A DEAD DEER UP A HILL

Type/UK/CD

On this wonderful, foggy dream of a record, Portland's Lizz Harris has gone and bested nearly everything she's done as Grouper, her often murky drone-folk solo project. For most of these 12 languid songs, it is just guitar strum, pillow resonance, and, sunk in the mix, her heavenly voice, singing about... well, it's really hard to say. As lucid as this album is for Harris, the lo-fi recording sounds like it's filtered through a wall or three: The sounds bleed and mingle like differently shaded rivers at a junction. Music this lovely could almost change the world. *Michael Byrne*

J*DAVEY THE BEAUTY IN DISTORTION/THE LAND OF THE LOST

Interdependent Media/US/CD

Released in advance of this buzz-worthy L.A. punk-funk duo's anticipated major-label debut, these two EPs seem destined for underground-classic status. How to describe J*Davey's sound? Imagine Jimmy Jam and Gary Numan tag-teaming Annabella Lwin and Lil' Kim in Prince's living room while J. Dilla and Portishead play dominoes. Jack



Davey's atypical synth-heavy beats deconstruct conventional soul, R&B, and hip-hop; Brook D'Leau's vocals swerve between stiletto-heeled come-ons and provocative musings on society's superficialities. Still, their Black New Wave concept could use more refinement in practice. The potential for complete subversion of urban pop music is there, but can J*Davey apply sufficient polish to their dissonant grooves while retaining their experimental rawness? We'll just have to stay tuned. *Eric K. Arnold*

JOEY NEGRO AND THE SUNSHINE BAND MOVING WITH THE SHAKERS

Z/UK/CD

On his Sunshine Band's third album, Joey Negro does, as the expression goes, "exactly what it says on the box": The kind of soulful disco that was the backbone of The Loft and The Garage, and the blueprint for deep house. So while the songs are beautiful and immaculately produced dance-gasms, they also sound painted-by-numbers. (Four minutes in? Time for the breakdown...) There are some obvious hits here—"Days Gone By" *begs* to be played at 2 a.m. caked in sweat, and "Man of War" could sit next to Mandrill's finest. But when an album lives up to its cover art this succinctly (flowers, butterflies), it's hard to get excited. *Justin Hopper*

KUDU BACK FOR MORE: A REMIX COLLECTION

Nublu/US/CD

New York-based trio Kudu makes dark, intense music, full of stutters, skitters, and knowing glances; it's an eerie, varied affair. But add in superstar remixers and the group is even harder to pigeonhole. Tommie Sunshine, for example, adds an insistent beat under the buzzingly defiant "Black Betty," making it all the more insidious, and Drop the Lime gives a frenetic, twitchy energy to "Neon Graveyard." Most of the remixed tracks may come from 2006's *Death of the Party* album, but *Back for More* is hardly more of the same. *Luciana Lopez*

NURSE WITH WOUND HUFFIN RAG BLUES

United Jnanna/US/CD

Nurse With Wound's Steven Stapleton has been releasing records for 30 years, producing post-industrial noise with everyone from Coil's Jhon Balance to Current 93's David Tibet. But unlike his gloomy, *musique concrète*-inspired past releases, *Huffin' Rag Blues* (recorded with experimental collaborator Andrew Liles) takes a noticeably



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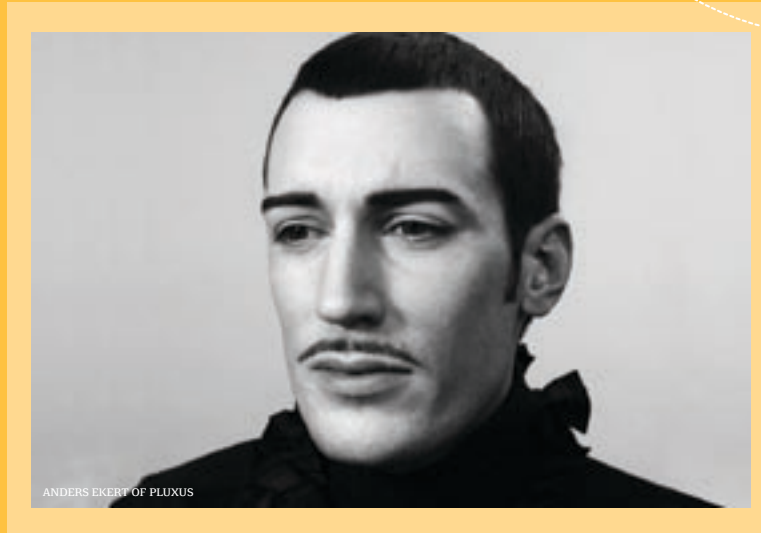
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PLUXUS

Solid State

Kompakt/GER/CD

It starts with a series of crackles and pops, then a melody line straight out of the Morricone songbook begins forming out of a mass of thickening beats. Enter guitars, keyboards, and drums, and a sugary electro-pop tune emerges. That's "Transient," the opener on *Solid State*, the new full-length by Swedish trio Pluxus. The formula is repeated on "Kinoton" to even better effect. The tune thumps along on bass plucks and electronic fuzz, then really comes on with a burst of playful guitars and lovely space-age vocoder-treated poetry ("Shine like a star/Shine down on me"). But the song seems truncated at three and a half minutes—the best part appears ready to launch and then suddenly it's done. "Sansui" and the title track shuffle and bump in the same fashion, though slightly darker, and with just a hint of Scandinavian winter in the air. Pluxus leaves you wanting more. *Walter Wasacz*



ANDERS EKERT OF PLUXUS

different tack. Though the record has its gnarly, melancholic moments, on tracks like "Black Teeth" (a vocal-heavy, drug-induced conversation with Satan) and "Ketamineaphonia" (a conga-driven, dark-ambient piece), *Huffin* is ultimately a little too jazzy for its own good. Even with all of the great gas-huffing references, this spook-jazz offering falls a little short—at least by Stapleton standards. *Fred Miketa*

SIGUR RÓS MEÐ SUÐ Í EYRUM VIÐ SPILUM ENDALAUST

XL/US/CD
If Iceland's cinematropic collective Sigur Rós were filmmakers, you'd file them between Terrence Malick and François Truffaut. Because on this, the group's fifth album, translated as "with a buzz in our ears, we play endlessly," Sigur Rós gravitates between oblique commentaries and a disarmingly near-field realism. Sigur Rós uses half of this new full-length to explore being naturalist auteurs beyond a common axis, capturing more direct address and jumpier cuts. The other, more macroscopic material—including a long pan featuring a 100-piece choir/orchestra—maintains a standard of epic scenes that act as ciphers, saturating listeners with ambiguous emotion. *Tony Ware*

TÉLÉPATHIQUE LAST TIME ON EARTH

The Control Group/US/CD
The trio of producer Erico "DJ Periferico" Theobaldo, vocalist Mylene, and an Apple laptop, Télépathique has been active in their hometown of São Paulo, Brazil for several years. Only now is the group seeing the North American release of its 2006 debut, with its 11 tracks of guitar- and synth-striated robo-funk. The human duo excels in sounding like patch chords and live PAs—the pleurably forward tones come across as quarter-inch stereo, not 96 kHz digital. There's an echo of manually triggered immediacy that ties this release more to the progressive breakbeat of the '90s than any contemporary scene. Following the man-machine timeline from Kraftwerk to *favela* soundsystems, Télépathique hybridizes to clap, clap those thighs—ez. *Tony Ware*

THE BUG LONDON ZOO

Ninja Tune/UK/CD
As soon as you try to grasp The Bug's latest, *London Zoo*, it careens off in unexpected directions, with beats, lyrics, reverb, and bass recreating themselves in endless new permutations with each consecutive track. By refusing to be nailed to one genre, The Bug has created a blazing, blistering document that's true to the bass ethic while smashing its boundaries. Is it dancehall? The Tippa Irie-voiced "Angry" might sway you in that direction. Is it dubstep or grime? Sure, "Poison Dart" and "Skeng" were legitimate hits in those scenes, but only because their brutal sonics sounded nothing like other dubstep tunes. With *London Zoo*, The Bug hits his stride. *Matt Earp*

THE DEAD SCIENCE VILLAINAIRE

Constellation/CAN/CD
On *Villainaire*, The Dead Science's vocalist (and *XLR8R* scribe) Sam Mickens takes inimitable to a whole different level. If, a few years back, he sounded like Xiu Xiu's Jamie Stewart at his most unquaking, now Mickens' warbling



birdsong (which is, oddly, both sensual/attractive and creepy) doesn't even sound *real*. Meaning, he's gotten very, very good. It couldn't be better framed by anything but the Seattle trio's noirish avant-jazz—and, on this record, their Hades lounge tunes sound noticeably more elaborate while keeping some semblance of accessibility. *Michael Byrne*

THE UGLYSUIT THE UGLYSUIT

Quarterstick/US/CD
The Uglysuit describes its music as "an extended love song to the notion that everything is possible, yet nothing is guaranteed"—a fit of hubris that somehow doesn't seem surprising coming from six 20-to-23-year-olds from Oklahoma City. Though their debut album doesn't live up to such conceptual heights (what could?), it's certainly nothing to sneer at. "...And We Became Sunshine" and "Everyone Now Has a Smile" are driven by rich piano arpeggios and light, blissed-out guitar, the lazy melodies wet with reverb. There seems nothing these kids would rather be doing than playing with each other—a premise that makes a sappy line like "We're up so high in the sky/Let's just relax and unwind" easy to ignore. *John S.W. MacDonald*

TRUCKASAURAS TEA PARTIES, GUNS AND VALOR

Fourthcity-Journal of Popular Noise/US/CD
Though Truckasaurus leaves room for a great deal of humor in their work—their debut album features toasting by the decidedly un-Jamaican DJ Collage, and its booklet comes streaked in a raging Hulkamaniac font—the music they make should not be taken lightly. Sequencing an armada of old Roland electronic machinery via a circuit-bent Gameboy, Truckasaurus makes abstracted instrumental hip-hop more emotional than any artists in recent memory. Alternately (and sometimes simultaneously) triumphant and melancholic, their songs throb with the cultural malaise of a 1980s childhood, recasting marathon Nintendo sessions and WWF obsession in the context of drunken, complicated adulthood. *Sam Mickens*



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Madvillain – Madvillainy 2: The Madlib Remix
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digital album drops in August, LP/CD Sept. 30



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COMP REVIEWS

9/08



STEPPAS' DELIGHT

Soul Jazz/UK/CD

DUBSTEP ALLSTARS VOL. 06

Honest Jon's/UK/CD

6BLOCC: ANALOG CLASH

Lo Dubs/US/CD



STARKEY PHOTO BY DAVID TILCHIN

A couple years after the great public unveiling of dubstep, the music has unequivocally burst out from its South London confines. That's probably a good thing, but like drum & bass and garage before it, the scene's musical identity is beginning to mutate in the strangest ways. Adjectives like "wobble" and "wonky" have become improbable sub-genre tags, and seemingly everyone is releasing some sort of compilation before the current run of self-mythologizing has had a chance to stick. It's an exciting scramble to watch, but it's also providing a mixed bag of quality, as the following releases attest.

Steppas' Delight is the latest Soul Jazz compilation, one that almost buries itself under a mountain of conceptual heft. The album packaging, which includes artful pictures of dubplate lathes and liner notes detailing the "pillars of dubstep," is certainly impressive, but who exactly is the album aimed at? If it's meant to educate dubstep novices, 19 unmixed tracks make for an awfully monotonous listen. Even great material like Shackleton's epic drum workout, "Blood on My Hands," wears thin when not used as a mixing tool.

One artist that does manage to shine in unmixed form on *Steppas' Delight* is Martyn. The Dutchman's already-classic "Broken" represents the smoother side of dubstep's dancefloor momentum, focusing on textural layers and chord changes that actually justify more than five minutes of listening. "Broken" is also one of the few tracks that translate outside of the club, its minimalist yet still dub-heavy tendencies demoting bass pressure to an equal role with everything else.

Portland label Lo Dubs' mix album, *Analog Clash*, claims to represent the "dubstep sound of the Americas," but really, it's more of an aggro-rave timewarp. L.A. DJ 6Blocc's template goes something like this: big, wooshy death-ray bass drops while breathy men whisper threats of impending doom. It's like evil cartoon drum & bass pitched down to 33, which was exactly what dubstep was (once) designed to transcend. The new ideas that *Analog Clash* does manage to present are thanks to Starkey, one of the few producers from the States that has carved out his own style. His remix of Pacheko's "Bi Polar Beat" is especially unusual—it borrows from grime's intensity, but layers in a bubbly midrange bassline that lends the mix some much-needed goofy charisma.

Appleblim's selections on *Dubstep Allstars Vol. 6* definitely sit on the genre's fringe, and the mix makes a solid case that those fringes might be the most compelling part of the scene. The standout track, TRG's "Decisions," slinks in a swingy vibe similar to U.K. garage, but syncopates the bass to create a faster sort of double-time polyrhythm. It's a great example of how dubstep's bass and drums can link up to form something other than soundsystem shock, interlocking and weaving back and forth to accentuate the beat, not compromise it.

The other nice trick that Appleblim pulls is giving an actual arc to his sequencing. *Allstars* moves like a bell curve, effortlessly running from minimal to dense and back again. It's a pace that not only speaks to Appleblim's abilities as a DJ, but also proves that even on the fringes of dubstep, there's enough variety out there to please both the dancefloor and the IDM-inclined chin-strokers. *Brandon Ivers*



FOG

DANIELE BALDELLI AND MARCO DIONIGI: COSMIC DISCO?! COSMIC ROCK!!!

Eskimo/BEL/CD

One of cosmic's distinguishing features is, in a sense, its lack of distinguishing features—its sheer flexibility in programming and mixing. In the wrong hands, it's a mess. In the right hands—like Daniele Baldelli's, considering he helped create the genre—its spacey power becomes mesmerizingly clear. Here Baldelli mixes tracks from synth-pop to Italo-disco to psychedelic to just weird. There are familiar names (Fra Lippo Lippi, Thompson Twins, Ray Parker, Jr.) and less familiar names (Bronx Irish Catholics). The mixing is smooth, almost too much so for the genre, but that admittedly helps the album cohere. Cheeseball hipsters spinning ironic Journey songs, take heed: This is how you throw down. *Luciana Lopez*

DELICIOUS VINYL ALL-STARS: RMXXOLOGY

Delicious Vinyl/US/CD

Electro's nuclear half-life has already defied science, coming back at least twice in the past decade. *Rmxxology* prepares funk-o-nauts and retro-futurists for another re-entry into orbital dancefloor space via nu-rave tweaks of Delicious Vinyl's classic catalog. "Bust a Move" and "Wild Thing" are rescued from frat-house karaoke infamy (the latter with help from Peaches); the Brand New Heavies' jazzy lounge "Never Stop" takes on a polyceramic disco sheen; Masta Ace's lyrically eviscerating "Slaughterhouse" gets a laser-tipped upgrade; and Hot Chip lovingly rubs gospelized broken beat reverence into the Pharcyde's "Passing Me By." Not bad, as remix projects go. Just watch out for planet-patrolling cyberboogiezoids with oversized leg openings and thermal visors. *Eric K. Arnold*

EVERY MOUTH MUST BE FED: 1973-1976

Pressure Sounds/UK/CD

As every true reggae aficionado knows, the early-to-mid '70s were a magical time for the genre. The rockers style was at its peak, and analog fullness hadn't yet been overtaken by digital minimalism. *Every Mouth Must Be Fed* adds to the already-considerable yield of quality reissues from this goldmine period. Evenly balanced between deejay, singer, and dubwise selections, this 20-track bag of rarities distilled from the catalog of obscure but crucial JA label Micron Music offers 'nuff natural vibes for the roots purist. Even without any recognizable hits, the classic material from the likes of U Roy, Tommy McCook, Jah Stitch, and Junior Byles rests on a solid foundation, holding firm three decades after the fact. *Eric K. Arnold*



FULL PUPP PRESENTS: GREATEST TITS VOL. 1

Full Pupp/NOR/CD

Ignore the clumsy title and the (supposedly) comedic sleeve of a gorilla in a wig and bra: This is, presumably, a deliberate but heavy-handed attempt to circumvent the clichés associated with Scandinavian music. Featuring a disc apiece of mixed and unmixed tracks from the Prins Thomas-curated label, *Greatest Tits* could be quite readily packaged in a whole heap of truisms about Northern Europe, with the sprawling expanse of the Norwegian landscape reflecting the spaciness and spaciousness of tracks from the likes of Todd Terje, Blackbelt Andersen, Diskjokke, and Mental Overdrive. The Aurora Borealis, meanwhile, could quite reasonably be claimed as the most appropriate disco lights for Prins Thomas' joyful mix. *David Hemingway*

LIFE BEYOND MARS: BOWIE COVERED

Rapster/US/CD

"Do you want more absinthe?" Kelley Polar asks his date before he drunkenly jigs to a French electro-pop version of David Bowie's "Magic Dance" (originally found on the *Labyrinth* soundtrack). It's too bad that few folks on this Bowie tribute share Polar's diabolical yet humorous spirit. However, some interpretations pay big returns: Matthew Dear's cover of "Sound and Vision" captures the cocaine-laced damage and skin-shedding of Bowie's Berlin period, while The Emperor Machine translates "Repetition" into a lost ZE Records mutant-disco jaunt. Elsewhere, The Thin White Duke gets butchered by Leo Minor's graceless cover of "Ashes to Ashes" and Susumu Yokota's drowsy rendition of the blue-eyed funk classic, "Golden Years." Pour me another round of absinthe. *Cameron Macdonald*

YOU DON'T KNOW: NINJA CUTS

Ninja Tune/UK/3CD

The stylistic vastness on the Ninja Tune discography is dumbfounding. As heard on this three-disc compilation, the British label and its affiliated imprints Big Dada and Counter have produced pioneering artists in just about every form of electronic-based music, whether it's downtempo, drum & bass, or some unclassifiable hybrid. Of the 49 selections featured here, the quality control is pretty impressive. If there's one thing that connects tracks as different as, say, Mike Ladd's wild-style hip-hop number "Blah Blah" and Amon Tobin's intricate instrumental "Bloodstone," it's the forward-looking mentality behind each. Granted, by the end of Disc Three, some of the more bizarre and considerably less exciting material (i.e. Fog's "Melted Crayons") kills the pulse found on the rest of the compilation. Just stick to the first two-and-a-half discs and you'll be treated to a collection of some of the best modern music around. *Max Herman*

LIVING IS HARD: WEST AFRICAN MUSIC IN BRITAIN, 1927-1929

Honest Jon's/UK/CD

With *Living is Hard*, the musicologists at Honest Jon's have unleashed the best songs from EMI's archive of 150,000 78s documenting folk music from Africa and the Middle East, dating back a century. This disc, the series' inaugural release, captures Britain's underground West African music from the Roaring Twenties. It's a fine snapshot of artists who never lost their connection to their homeland. The songs (sung in their native tongue) range from harmonious call-and-response tunes and gentle, Caribbean-style guitar ballads to humorous moments like Ben Simmons challenging someone to a fight. Add Honest Jon's excellent remastering job and you've got a promising start to what looks like a great excavation of lost music. *Cameron Macdonald*

PANCADAO DO MORRO: FUNK DO FLAMIN' HOTZ, JA E?

Flamin' Hotz/US/CD

Over the last two decades, Brazil's *baile funk* has been going through the same assimilation process that the now-ubiquitous forms of tango, *fado*, and hip-hop went through years before. Reared in lower-class *favelas*, it is often criticized for its explicit sexual undertones, in both lyrics and dance styles. Yet in that community, and the international club scene that has embraced it, *baile funk* is one of the hottest sounds going. This 23-song collection assembles tracks that incorporate old-school MPC beats and party anthems akin to the most memorable NYC hip-hop—the genre it's most often associated with. The choppiness and videogame effects are part of the charm, but the substance is in the bass. *Derek Beres*

WATERGATE 01: ONUR OZER

Watergate/GER/CD

Onur Ozer takes first crack at this mix series from Berlin club Watergate, and it's going to be a hard one to best. Tapping into the minimal end of house and techno via tracks from the Perlon, Vakant, and Get Physical labels, Istanbul resident Onur Ozer creates a crisp, perfectly poised mix that forgoes overt highs in favor of constancy and gradual mutation—at times it feels as if you're listening to a single piece of music rather than 15 distinct tracks. When Ozer introduces, say, the clipped voices of Cassy's "April" or the mournful bouzouki playing that cuts through Jens Zimmerman's "C30," these seem less like jarring, forced gestures and more like masterfully deployed decoration. *David Hemingway*



AS DUBSTEP STRUGGLES TO REACH CRITICAL MASS, SURESHOT (AND SCATTERSHOT) COMPILATIONS ABOUND,



Broken Business

By Peter Nicholson

FUTURE JAZZ AND BUSTED BEATS



ARCH_TYP



BENSON

It's boogie time! **Bamboo's** producer **Benson** has the perfect summer funk with "Whatever It Is" (Raw Fusion) and I can't think of a better way to start things off than with the soulful strut of this cut, all hand claps, bright horns, slap bass, and rich male vocals. It's one of those tunes that just makes you want to smile—definitely pick up "Part 2" since it also has the downbeat slinker "Can't Get Enough." Raw Fusion is on a bit of a roll right now—their other hot number comes from Warsaw, Poland's **Innocent Sorcerers**. "One Dollar Race" b/w "The Score" features two jazz-driven cuts: the a-side is more on a Detroit house tip with a mad breakdown and the flip is a big ol' bruk re-work of compatriot **Krysztof Komeda**, all choppy beats and brassy horns.

In much warmer climes, Puerto Rico's Amalgama Records brings us the latest from studio madman **Juan Mauricio "Chuki" Rojas**, who is the guiding production force behind **La Vida Buena's Vanguardia Sonora**. Featuring the rich tenor vocals of rumba singer **Luis F. Totin Agosto**, scores of talented live musicians, and Chuki's super-tight beats, the title track moves along at a good clip, perfect for showing your dance partner what you've got. "Humanidad," on the b, has a wildly squelching synth line, boombastic bass drum, and (of course) plenty of hot Puerto Rican percussion. Essential!

Don't like to play favorites but I've gotta once again shout out a release on BagPak Records, this one the second for the label from Harlem's own **Charles Noel** (a.k.a. **Arch_Typ**). The slappy breakbeats

of **Yellowtail's** take on "Letting Go" is my favorite—the man has a way with vocals—but don't sleep on "Slide Technique," a downtempo tweaker full of the future funk.

Back to the jazzier side of the equation, take a dive into **Nasty Depths** (BPSS) with **Summary**. This Birmingham nine-piece is led by sax player **Mary Wakelam** and the title cut rides tightly interwoven rhythms with plenty of horns and vocals from **Taharka** and **Naomi**. Organic, and super-funky.

I'm feeling a bit schizophrenic, so I'll swing over to the tech-y end of the room with the humorously named **Goya Owes Me Money** EP from **Altered Natives**. It's a digital release on Eye 4 Eye Recordings, and cuts like "Triple F (Big Gal)" and "Mister Poon" are punchy blasts of bruk madness, all chopped drums and synth stabs. Rocking stuff!

Nice to hear from **Recloose** again, and "Catch a Leaf" on Loop Sounds shows **Matt Chicoine** still has what it takes—classy female vocals with solid, chopped backing tracks slotting in perfectly over punchy beats. It's on the downtempo tip, with a deliberate sway just right for sultry summer nights.

Gonna end things this month with one of the men who got the whole bruk thang started, **I.G. Culture**. His latest for Freedom Sounds is "Xen Badism Pt. 2" and damn it's sweet. Super-dense production with swirling strings, layers of samples, and I.G.'s patented beats, it's far-out future jazz—the soundtrack for minds that have already been blown, but want some more.



En Tu Casa

By Nick Chacona

HOUSEKEEPING: FROM TECH AND MINIMAL TO DEEP AND TRADITIONAL



IAN FRIDAY



JEROME DERRADJI PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER FRANKO



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It seems as though house music is cool again. With teens dancing to Neyo's 4/4 hit "Closer," fidget house popping up in every hipster DJ's set from Stockholm to Melbourne, and a certain touring DJ and label owner passing along the word that minimal is now called "Berlin house," it's safe to say that the culture recycler has hit the late-'80s/early-'90s period full-force, and with it has brought a newfound reverence for the classic elements of house. But hey, none of you keeping it real in the underground give a shit anyway, so here's wha' g'wan with the latest.

The long-overdue LP from **Copyright** has finally hit the shelves and is full of silky-smooth big-room production. The first of **Voices and Visions'** (Defected) two discs contains unreleased tracks (featuring collabs with **Mr. V**, **Miss Patty**, and **Jazzie B**) and classics like "He Is" and "Voices." The second is a compendium of some of the duo's finest remix moments, including their edit of **MAW's** "I Can't Get No Sleep" and remix of **Faze Action's** "Kariba."

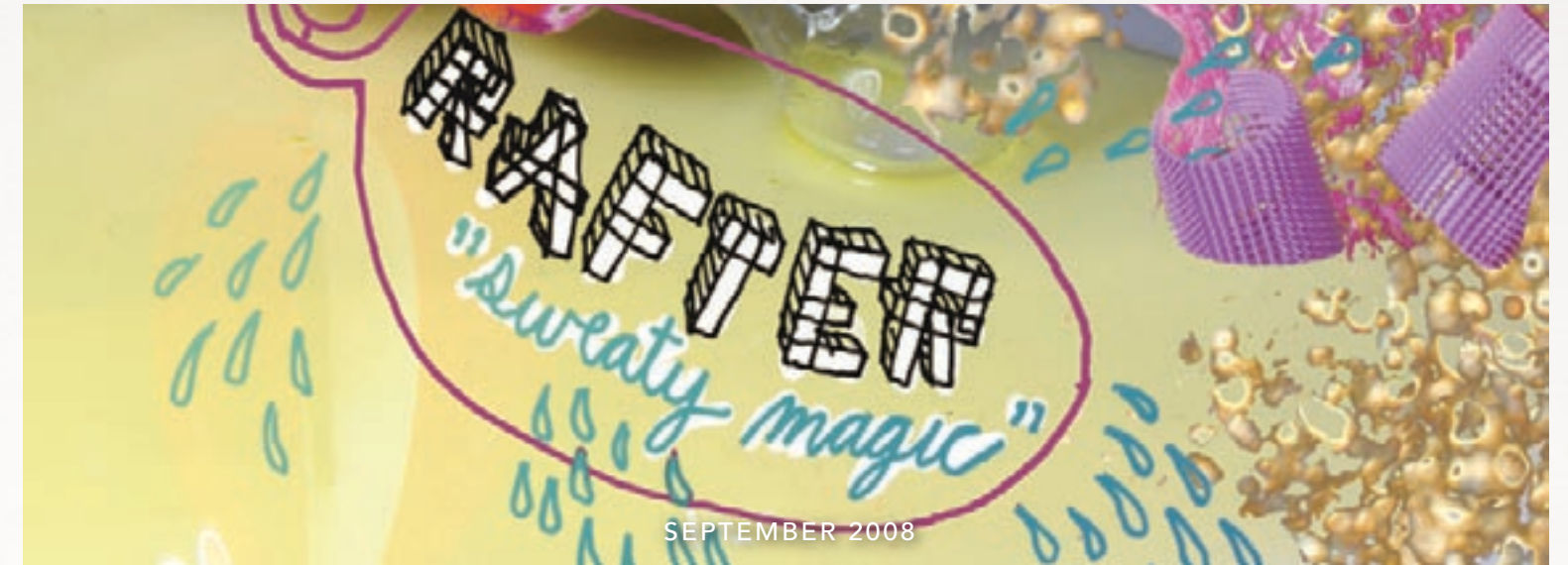
Another recent comp worth checking out is the **We Love Space** series' eighth edition, mixed by **Paul Woolford** and '80s Ibiza legend **Alfredo**. The title, **We Love Space 08: Sundays/The New True Sound of Balearic Ibiza** (Ministry of Sound), may be a mouthful, and it may seem like another generic seasonal comp, but the track selection is impeccable. Sir Woolford mixes modern masterpieces such as the **C2** mix of **Francesco Tristano's** "The Melody" and the **Soul Designer** mix of **Chymera's** "Hundulu" with classics like **Paper Moon's** "Tracktion." Alfredo takes Disc Two, and bounces around between classic Ibiza anthems such as **Solution's** "Feels So Right" and **Ramirez's** "Hablando" and more recent moments like **Scott Grooves'** "The Journey" and **Henrik Schwarz & Amampondo's** "I Exist Because of You."

Speaking of Henrik, once again the German house whiz has teamed up with pals **Dixon** and **Âme** for the follow-up to their 2006 hit "Where We At." The first cut on "D.P.O.M.B." (Innervisions) sounds as if the trio conjured the spirit of **Tribal America**-era Deep Dish for studio guidance—meaning this is timeless. The flip takes a more smoked-out, tribal approach, with the percussion pushed to the fore, tighter drums and bass, and an odd synth-flute that sounds as if it was taken from an old Jungle Sounds record and time-warped into the 21st century.

Bosnia's **Mladen Solomun** has developed quite a following with releases on Dessous, Leibe Detail, and his own own Dynamic imprint. His latest for Four:Twenty Recordings, a double a-sider consisting of "International Hustle" and "Explicit," sees Solomun continuing to develop his dub-styled take on modern tech-house. No doubt there would there have been a bidding war between Plastic City and Force Tracks had these been shopped around back at the turn of the millennium.

Rumor has it Still Music label boss **Jerome Derradji** has finally tried his hand at production, and the result is said to be an epic tech remix of a scarcely known **Earth Wind & Fire** track (a live take at that). Londoners **Ok_Ma** also take a crack at said track, "S.O.S." (Stilllove4music), and promise to deliver a more organic funk-ed-out version that fans of the Unabombers or Beatfanatic will bug on.

Going further to the deep side, 25-year-old Norwegian producer **Dalminjo** will drop his latest release, "I'll Wait" (featuring vocals by **Lenny Hamilton**), via Papa Records. Though the original and Dalminjo's own mixes stand strongly on their own, it's the deep, bumping mixes from NY's **Ian Friday** that really spice this EP up, even if the production is a bit muddy.





fabric 41
Luciano
Out Now

On fabric 41, Luciano gracefully dives into the swelling, playful sounds of summer with a sublime and rhythmic mix. Warm, colourful house beats connect the dots between the elements of Defected's dazzle, Strictly Rhythm's soul and the consistent brilliance of Luciano's own imprint, Cadenza.



FABRICLIVE 41
Simian Mobile Disco
Available: 09.16.08

Simian Mobile Disco take a step away from any misguided preconceptions and showcase an exemplary DJ set on FABRICLIVE 41: a non-stop feel good mix that shuffles between 4/4 rarities and old gems. SMD strip back and let loose with the thump of Smith N Hack, the disco shine of Metro Area and the proggy sounds of Sisters of Transistors.



Growl
Radioactive Man
Available: 09.16.08

Radioactive Man is a dark talent and his new album 'Growl' passionately scribes the next suitably dirty and thoughtful chapter of his complex and disturbing sonic dreamscape. With vocal tracks from Andrew Weatherall and Dot Allison, 'Growl' is a beautiful nod to all that is gentle in modern electronica.

Forthcoming in the series: Àme, Freq Nasty, Metro Area, Switch & Sinden, A-Trak.



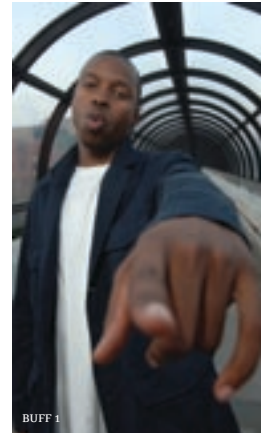
Read the Label

By Jesse "Orosco" Serwer

HIP-HOP MIXTAPES, WHITE LABELS, AND SHIT



BLACK MILK PHOTO DOUG COOMBE



BUFF 1



VORDUL MEGA

We're going back to basics this month. No electro-hipster rap, internet "sensations" or Weezy mixtapes; just lots of great straight-up hip-hop records, which happen to be in abundance lately.

Chronically underrated **Slum Village** representative **Elzhi** has returned with a vengeance in 2008, after laying curiously low throughout the post-Dilla Detroit rap resurgence of the past several years. *Euro Pass*, which plays like a really good album but is actually a freebie mixtape from a recent European tour, sets the bar high for El's Fat Beats LP, *The Prelude*, which should be out by the time you read this. Lots of slick talk and intricate concepts here; see the subconscious-probing "Talkin' in My Sleep" for both. Perhaps just as notably, *Euro* also serves as a showcase for the banging, Motown-flavored beats of D-Town producers **DJ Dez** and **Black Milk**.

Speaking of Black Milk, the Dilla protégé also makes his presence felt on *There's Only One* (A-Side Worldwide), the sophomore LP from Ann Arbor's **Buff 1**. However, it's lesser-known production squad **The Labtechs** who bring the heat on lead single, "Beat Your Speakers Up," a boom-bap anthem that's practically all kicks and snares.

Haven't listened to Cannibal Ox's *The Cold Vein* in a minute but I always thought it was **Vordul Mega**, not El-P's production or Mega's more hyped rhyme partner Vast Aire, that really made that album great. "Megagraphitti" (Backwoodz Studios) is the lead single for Mega's sophomore LP, also titled *Megagraphitti*, and it straight up knocks. A grim piece of Harlem noir that sounds like it's pulled from a late '90s *Future Flavors* or *Stretch and Bobbito* broadcast, it follows in the decidedly anti-El-P direction Mega took on his prior LP, *The Revolution of Young Havocs*.

DJ Premier sounds like he's gotten his hands into some Italo-disco on "Say Goodnight," the venomous new single from Boston rapper **Reks**. Whatever it's made out of, the beat is just a monster, one of Premo's hottest in years. Reks, who's just dropped the fine LP *Grey Hairs* (Showoff/Brick), blesses it with seething, anti-industry sentiment and Bill O'Reilly disses, all wrapped in a tight flow reminiscent of the late, great Big L.

Speaking of Big L, his former **Diggin' in the Crates** crewmates **O.C.** and **A.G.** have teamed up on an upcoming collaborative LP entitled *Oasis*. While lead single "Put It in the Box" (Nature Sounds) isn't the awesome opening salvo DITC devotees might have hoped for, the freewheeling ease the pair has with one another here is encouraging.

I'm always a big supporter of anything involving the **Monster Island Czars**, the shadowy Long Island collective known for their appearances on MF DOOM's *Operation: Doomsday* as well as their own unsung classic, *Escape from Monsta Island*. **Kongcrete** (a.k.a. Kong) is the latest MIC crewmember to drop a solo LP; while his *Shackles Off* (Classified Recordings) is neither a single nor a mixtape, it is one of those way-below-the-radar releases we like to cover here from time to time when they're really good, as this one is. Now, *Shackles* certainly has its flaws—namely the awkwardly upbeat dancehall anthem "Babylon" and some hideous cover art—but tracks like "Who" and "Broken Safety," both featuring MIC cohort **Spiega**, more than make up for such shortcomings, with chaotic rhymes and dystopian beats that call to mind the aforementioned *Escape*. Seek this one out.



Reggae Guest Reviews: South Rakkas Crew

Growing up in the reggae and dancehall hotbed of Toronto certainly left its mark on South Rakkas Crew founders Dennis "Dow Jones" Shaw and Alex G, but it wasn't until they moved to Orlando that they really let that influence shine. Now not only they're some of dancehall's most sought-after producers, but they've got their paws in the pop world, remixing Beck, Lily Allen, Timbaland, and even Duran Duran. Still, Shaw, who's earned the name King of the Cuts for his fast-paced, chopped-up production and mixing style, never fails to give it up for the Tee Dot. In this month's guest reviews, he's quick to call out his native Torontonians Let's Go to War. Check out what else he's feeling lately. *Taryn Harrington southrakkascrew.com*

LET'S GO TO WAR "PUSH UP YR LIGHTER"

Last Gang/CAN/12

This is an absolute banger! A great tune and DJ tool for transitioning between tempos at 120 bpm. These guys fuse African rhythms and electro madness and top it off with a Beastie Boys-esque in-your-face vocal style. The Canadian influence is well heard with the choice of sounds and is just a glimpse into what these Toronto natives are about. A definite wheel-back on this one! *Dow Jones*

TERRY LYNN "KINGSTON LOGIC"

Phree Music/JAM/7

If you took Daft Punk to the ghettos of Jamaica this is probably what they'd come up with. "Kingston Logic" takes DP's "Technologic" and puts you straight in the middle of Waterhouse, Kingston, with lyrics that sum up ghetto-survival mentality. Wicked performance, vocals, and lyrics to shorten the gap between electro and dancehall. *Dow Jones*

ERUP "CLICK MY FINGER"

Truckback/JAM/7

The beat has simple old-school dancehall stabs with some sweet synths that make you just feel good. Erup is really coming into his own. His confidence beams on this track as he calmly claims that he clicks his fingers and the girls wanna roll with him. Every time it plays in the dance everyone snaps their fingers to this one. *Dow Jones*

MR. VEGAS "LEAN WID IT"

Delicious Vinyl/US/7

Okay, I know this is not the newest track; it really made its mark months ago, but I want to send a message to dubstep DJs around the world. Wheel up in the middle of your set and drop this heavyweight: It will crush everyone on the dancefloor. There is nothing better than a dubstep DJ dropping old-school reggae vibes, and this one fits just like a Tetris piece—trust me. *Dow Jones*

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After Silence

By Martin De Leon

THE OUTER ORBITS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC



TELEPATHE



MAGIC JOHNSON PHOTO BY DANIELLE NAPIER



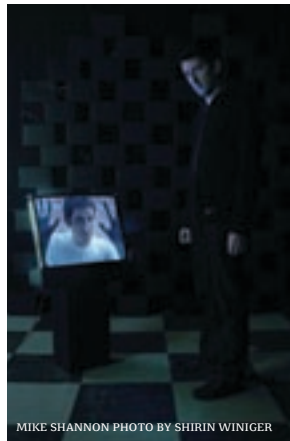
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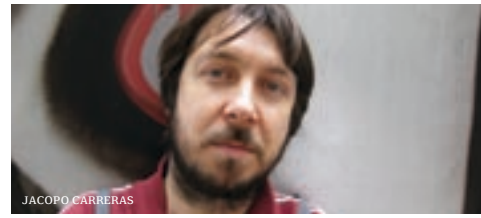
Bubble Metropolis

By ML Tronik

HOUSEKEEPING: FROM TECH AND MINIMAL TO DEEP AND TRADITIONAL



MIKE SHANNON PHOTO BY SHIRIN WINIGER



JACOPO CARRERAS



PHILIP SHERBURNE

Alien songs, like the ones we cover this month, are a genre unto themselves. Familiar, disjointed, yet bugged-out enough that they sound like the thoughts of the stranger eating a bagel next to you.

Los Angeles' post-genre duo **Hecuba** offers some great examples. Their terrific latest EP, *Sir* (Manimal Vinyl), throws together silly electronics ("Yes") like Brooklyn's weirdest, but with twice the humor and half the pretension. "Ch-Changes" strips the synths and just leaves a lullaby to a lost future—or maybe it's just a song about how traffic sucks. Either way, Hecuba wins.

DIY doesn't always mean starting a 'zine—sometimes it means starting your own label. New Jersey's gloom-hop geniuses **Dalek** have done just that with their Deadverse Recordings. Their debut release features the throwback avant-garde flows of **Oddatee's** *Halfway Homeless*. Like vintage Company Flow—dark, smart, and street—this new label won't disappoint.

Two Portlanders who also won't let you down are awesome bilingual rock duo **Magic Johnson**. Their new 7", "Telenovelas" (Ol' Factory), punches you in your fat face with Erase Errata-esque minimalist-punk jabs. Sadly their songs are less than two minutes long, but that's all you need—Latinos with noisy guitars are the future, and I should know.

Warp's newest signing, **Pivot**, brings a healthy dose of math rock and Autechre beats to the table on their *In the Blood* EP. The instrumental Australian trio gets angular and noodles with synths and slithery guitars ("In the Blood") but then unleashes brainy electronics on the bright highlight, "Didn't I Furious," which makes my toes wiggle.

But if you want to shake your grapes just put on Chicago duo **The Cool Kids'**

debut 10-song EP, *The Bake Sale* (Chocolate Industries). Post-EPMD beats knock around young rappers **Chuck English** and **Mikey Rocks** on slow jams ("One Two") and too-fly-not-to-fly 808 tracks ("88"). Damn, this is dumb-fresh!

New York promoter **Todd P** also discovers unknown bands as highlighted in the forthcoming documentary coming soon called *Todd P Goes to Austin*. Bands I've championed like **Ponytail** and **The Death Set** go crazy and yell into microphones over YouTube-quality footage. The doc shows the nutso scene of awesome upstarts like **Mika Miko**, **Matt and Kim**, **Telepathe**, and more. Google it.

For new bands, shopping for a label sucks. Every month I'll try and give shine to at least one unsigned producer or band. **60 Tigres** are a synth-punk group from Monterrey, Mexico and are touring behind their terrific *Los Emigrantes* CD-R. DFA, if you're reading this, a moustache-sporting **Juan Maclean** can't be that bad, right?

Don't take off those summer shorts yet. **Architecture in Helsinki** drops one of their best records with the *Like It or Not* EP (Polyvinyl). Catchy-as-hell bangers like "Like It or Not 2" had me shaking it all over the apartment. "Beef in a Box" is like ESG on crack but it all gets the **El Guincho** treatment as Barcelona's nicest producer samples obscure Spanish records, *cumbia*, lazy dub, and ambient yelling on his jaw-dropping remix of the title track.

Lastly, drummer **Leni Zumas** of the Numbers-esque Brooklyn band **Ssspectres** (who have toured with Magik Markers) just came out with a great book of weird short stories, *Farewell Navigator* (Open City Books), proving that alien art goes beyond just verses and choruses.

Bearweasel kicks it off this month with their latest, *Wander Down* (Murmur). Deep and slinky, this one starts off with a minimal groove and evolves into a funky synth-stab jam. The remix by **Dubshape** provides a deeper take on things.

Also check out Detroit's **Lee Curtiss**, who gives us something different with his new one, the *Smut* EP (Dumb-Unit). If I'm to believe what I'm told about *Smut*, it's an homage to those hot, sticky midwestern nights and the burning in the loins that often accompanies them. Rather than dark and minimal techno, this one actually has a bit of a dirty club vibe to it. (I particularly like "Blue Blockin'.")

Dirty in a different way is the new *Wagon Repair* release by **Hrdvsnion**, "Love's Duel" b/w "Melting Ice." Hrdvsnion returned to the eclectic Canadian label from Canada (run by his brother **Mathew Jonson** and friends) to drop an intriguing bit of experimental techno. Glitchy and melodic, neither track is really dancefloor material, but they're still some of the better productions from the past month.

Also topping my list of hot bits for the month are two releases on Lan Muzic. First, **Jacopo Carreras'** "One Sentence" immediately engages you in with its bongo groove and holds on until it gives way to a smoothed-out techno stomper. "Manky" is the b-side and should be given serious consideration, too. Alongside that, we have *XLR8R* scribe **Philip Sherburne's** newest effort, the *Salt & Vinegar* EP. The follow-up to last year's "Lumberjacking" is laden with synths and straight-forward kicks and claps, just how I like it. All three tracks are an impressive second effort—do not sleep on this.

Lee Jones' recent *Safari* EP (Aus Music) is something you'll wanna keep your eye

out for as well. Its first track, "Roadworks," sounds a bit like Jones' take on Kerri Chandler. The title track and its remix are both junglistic excursions with minimalist leanings. Definitely give this one a whirl while opening up a DJ night and set the mood right.

Soundsystems and dancefloors will soon light up with the sounds of **Mike Shannon's** *Memory Tree* full-length (Minus). I don't usually mention many LPs in this column, but this one has earned its keep—and it's not even out yet. Shannon raises his game a few levels and provides nine slices of funky techno here. He gets right down to business on cuts like "Enero," "Uno Para El Sol," and "Regalos de Pandora."

Although it's been out for a while, you may not yet have **Pied Plat's** "Ode to Ede" (Rush Hour). This is a bomb, folks. This two-track synth banger is designed for one reason only—to mash up your dance. "Double Trouble" and the title track both deserve lots of play, so go find it and pound it!

Two-step techno? Is it a new genre designed specifically to destroy my brain? I don't think so, but one listen to **Sei A's** *Smile for Me* EP on Missive and I've got to wonder. It's got jackin' techno with snippets of R&B vocals all cut up and thrown about the place, just like some of my old favorite U.K. garridge tracks used to. The **Chaim** remix is definitely more techno, yet leaves bits of the original vocal in. Rewind!

Lastly, we've got the brand-new one from **Tomoki & Nono**, *Voices* (Four:Twenty Recordings). The title track builds underneath strange barks, culminating in a freaky climax. "3 Years" follows in the same vein but is more aggressive and designed for peak-time dancefloor activity. Cop it!



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Fast Forward By Method One

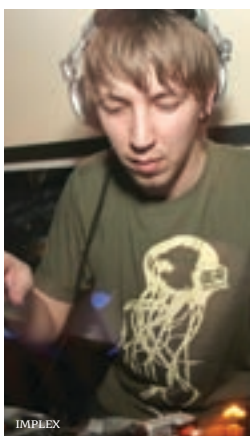
EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF DRUM & BASS



MARCUS INTALEX



VOJA



IMPLEX

Traditionally, this time of year is always exciting for drum & bass. The late-summer heat has always been a reliable counterpart to big beats and ambitious projects, and as we transition into Autumn we find that 2008 has continued the trend. New albums by heavyweights like **D-Bridge**, **Calibre**, and **Pendulum** have already set the stage for literally dozens of impressive releases.

But since we don't have room to mention dozens of releases, we'll start this month's column with one that's sure to be noticed: legendary Swedish producer **Seba's Return to Forever** (Secret Operations). With a range of styles and influences, the album flows seamlessly from dark breakbeat soundscapes to uplifting vocal rollers, with subtle detours into house and late-night jazz. It's hard to pick favorites, but the sublime vocal-driven "Blaze and Fade Out" and the rude breakbeat mash-up of "External Reality" are all standout tracks.

Amaning's BIOS Recordings is set to release *Vol. 1*, a double-CD set featuring 13 new tracks plus an exclusive studio mix by Amaning himself. While this release is aimed primarily at fans of smoother D&B, a look at the tracklisting shows more than a few surprises. **Munk's** "Circles of Hell" and **Bionic1's** "Frozen Liquid" are certainly not for the timid, and they are balanced out with some lovely work by French sensation **Naibu**, **Dan Marshall & Mixmaster Doc**, and **Submorphics**.

Our third (and final) album veers off into uncharted territory. Counter Intelligence's *Propaganda* comp deserves mention because the label has bypassed the traditional route of distributors and middlemen for a more DIY approach,

selling vinyl and CD releases directly to consumers at counterintelligence.nl. Even if the business doesn't interest you, the music surely will, with tunes that will satisfy mainstream D&B heads as well as people who like their beats a little more experimental. Some standouts: Russian producers **Implex & Voja** combine on two excellent tracks that bridge the gap between liquid D&B and more traditional atmospherics. **Jason oS** contributes three solid cuts, including "Nothing Is True," an amazing amen workout remixed by **Equinox**. Getting even choppier, **Alpha Omega** kills speakers with a remix of **Moving Forward's** "Ethical Hardcore."

The Soul:R label has a busy release schedule as well, with two EPs coming from **Marcus Intalex** and **ST Files**. Intalex's *Astro Dance* EP is just stunning, with warm analog synths washing over every track and loads of quality (but not overdone) references to classic electro and New Wave tunes. ST Files' *Moods* EP is pure quality as well, from the epic strings of the title track to the New Age rhythms of "Eight Six" and "Cold Front." In addition, frequent collaborator Calibre brings a smooth jazzy touch to "Back Again."

Closing out the column, we focus on New Zealand's Samurai Music, which is fast becoming a favorite with its lovely packaging and high-quality tunes. The newest release from the Kiwi crew is "Vibrations" b/w "Shame" by **TREI**, and it is certainly one for the dancefloor. Both tracks propel themselves forward on smashing beats and grinding bass. Fans of **State of Mind** or **Chris Su** should definitely check it out.



Lesser Gonzalez Alvarez
Why Is Your Following? CD/digital
A testament to the beauty of simplifying your life, Lesser Gonzalez Alvarez delivers his songs with a sense of whimsical earnestness, garnering comparisons to Nick Drake, John Fahey, and Donovan. Out September on Carpark



Adventure S/T CD/digital
Adventure is an advanced, dance-floor friendly take on the music of early video gaming. Let the epic quest for the master sword begin! Out September on Carpark



Eric Copeland Alien in a Garbage Dump 12"/digital
The second solo release from Eric Copeland of Black Dice. Out October on Paw Tracks

Coming soon: Dan Deacon *Ilmorst*, The Lines, Dirt May, Black Dice, and a Beach House seven-inch.

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Techno Guest Reviews: Adultnapper

Check out Adultnapper's MySpace page, and you'll find that the only musical influences he lists are "the noises in [his] head." Appropriately creepy, quirky, and not-too-serious, the statement is reflective of the tech-house tracks that Adultnapper (a.k.a. Francis Harris) makes... and man, does he make 'em. He's such a prolific player that Four:Twenty, Mule Electronic, Dirt Crew, and Audiomatique combined couldn't house all his tracks (and they've tried). Ergo: Ransom Note, the Brooklyn producer's own label, an outlet for the over-pouring of minimal goodness from his and others' hard drives. But while Adultnapper is the consummate label head/producer, he's also no slouch on the turntables. Catch him this month at New York's Minitek Festival, where he'll probably be dropping a few of the tunes below. *Taryn Harrington* adultnapper.com

TOUANE "UOVO"

Lichen/UK/12

Touane never ceases to impress me. Every single he puts out is as unique as it is powerful. This one is no exception: deep, mysterious late-night tech-house, with his singular touch of musical complexity, and sacrificing none of the drama. Phenomenal. I can't wait for the next. *Adultnapper*

BRENDON MOELLER "THE BIG THRILL"

Connaisseur/GER/12

It seems like Brendon Moeller is on the top of his game lately. With this Detroit synth monster, his first EP for the excellent Connaisseur label, he blows the proverbial roof off. Simple, effective, and timeless-proper techno for all those in the know. *Adultnapper*

GRINDVIK "DRIFT"

Stockholm Ltd./SWE/12

Yet another groundbreaking slice of techno from Mr. Grindvik. This stuff is just indescribable. Its effectiveness on a dancefloor at the right time is devastating. An almost-Basic Channel vibe coupled with Grindvik's amazing ability to build tension, this one is an absolute killer. Ouch. *Adultnapper*

BURNSKI "FERTILE"

Dessous/GER/12

After some years of churning out house and tech-house in its varying forms, it would seem that one would get bored with Dessous, but, as is the case with this new EP, they always sound fresh and familiar in all the right ways. "Fertile" is deep, dubby, classic tech-house with an intense late-night edge. *Adultnapper*

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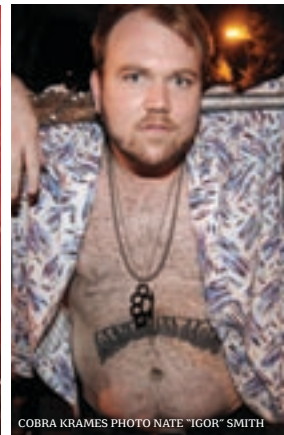
Basic Needs

By Kid Kameleon

LOW-END NECESSITIES, FROM RAGGA TO DUBSTEP AND BEYOND



BERSA DISCOS' DISCO SHAWA AND ORO11



COBRA KRAMES PHOTO NATE "IGOR" SMITH



Reggae Rewind

By Ross Hogg

THE HEARSAY AND DOWNLOW ON DANCEHALL, DUB, ROOTS, AND LOVERS ROCK



BUSY SIGNAL



JAH CURE



MR. VEGAS

Every once in a while an artist comes along to break the mold and forces me to think about his or her music not just in the context of their genre, or their neighboring genres, or dance music in general, but of music as a whole. London's **Boy 8-Bit** manages to do it with every single track he makes. His list of remixed artists is already pretty impressive: **Black Ghosts**, **Armand Van Helden**, **Burial**, **Lethal Bizzle**, and two dozen more have gone under his knife (although highest praise is reserved for his **South Rakkas** "Mad Again" remix, which is one for the ages). Now that some of his original productions have surfaced, with "Fogbank" (Trouble and Bass) and *The Suspense Is Killing Me* EP (Mad Decent), Boy 8-Bit's affable but utter brilliance is fully on display. Every track he makes is a rare creation: dance music that's both sonically fascinating but also bursting with energy, from 8-bit synth bleeps through every conceivable breakbeat shuffle permutation, low-end wobble, and rave build-up. And they're all squeezed into five minutes. Rest assured, when this boy releases his full-length album, it's going to be on most folks' year-end top tens. Check out the ruckus at myspace.com/boy8bit.

While Boy 8-Bit is all about the singular creation, **Mochipet** has always been about the collabo. This year's *Microphone Pet* grabbed dancefloor attention for mashing up 19 crunked-out tracks of Mochi beats with world-class MCs. Now Daly City, CA's *enfant terrible* has gone all Web 2.0 and open-sourced the entire album's tunes, inviting anyone and everyone to post their remixes to remixmicpet.blogspot.com. The incentive? One lucky winner will be chosen by Mochi and a cast of

all-star remixers, including Basic Needs regulars **Chris De Luca vs. Phon.o**, **Darko of Spank Rock**, **DJ C**, **Jahcoozi**, **Boreta of Glitch Mob**, and **Machinedrum**, to have their remix included in the 12"/digital remix EP out soon. My favorite track so far? The "Girls and Boys and Toys" remix by S.F.'s **Salva**, which falls somewhere between Flying Lotus and Christian Fennesz. For now, myspace.com/salvabeats is the best place to find this stellar newcomer.

Some real solid tunes have just been issued from **Cobra Krames**, who laces up **KRS ONE**, **Lady Saw**, and **En Vogue** with just the right amount of B-more beat treatment on his *ThrowBaxxx* EP on Toronto's NastyMixxx. I'm also loving the *digi-cumbia* style of the first two Bersa Discos EPs (*Bersa Discos Vol. 1* and 2), featuring all kinds of slinky madness from **Daleduro**, **Oro11**, **DJ Negro**, and **Alex Pasternak**, among others. Also, Germany's Up My Alley has released **Robot Koch's** stellar glitch-shuffle EP, *Vortex Cookies*, a collaboration with **215:The Freshest Kidz's Cerebral Vortex**. Crazy flows meet laser beats, complete with **moO** and **flako** uptempo mixes. Don't sleep!

Finally, I don't know whether to be more impressed by the **Baffin Island Beat Brigade's** audacious claim that the whole crew lives in the city of Iqaluit in the Nunavut territory of Canada, or that they remixed **Toto's** "Africa" and it actually sounds good! Both **Rockmaster Rus B** and **Nice Slice** bring the choppy funk on their latest 7", "Hands up for Africa" b/w "No Parking in Bmore," and their tunes make a fine addition to any bass musician's crate. Plus the polar bear logo art wins the heart. Get thee to myspace.com/bibbre recordings for more chilly fun.

Almost 10 years ago, **Sean Paul** and **Mr. Vegas** combined on "Hot Gyal Today," one of the biggest tunes on **Steeley and Cleve's** Street Sweeper riddim. While the former went on to achieve international superstardom, Vegas has not fared as well. However, he is currently doing big things with "Mus' Come a Road" (Delicious Vinyl), which contains a creatively flipped sample of **Barrington Levy's** classic "Prison Oval Rock." He also has a big tune out called "Good Up," which finds him returning to his signature sing-jay style.

Meanwhile, Sean Paul is still doing his thing all over the new Sand Fly riddim. He appears on "Grip" and is joined by **Shane O** on "Girls Territory." The uptempo version also features contributions from **Aidonia**, **Busy Signal**, **Leftside**, and newcomer **Konshens**, who also appears on the new Tear Up Jeans riddim. Veteran producers **Ward 21** update the mid-'90s Corduroy riddim here and keep the trouser-naming theme intact, with vocals from **Serani** (who has been on fire for the past year), **Elephant Man**, **Voicemail**, and up-and-comer **Natalie Storm**.

Jah Cure's "Hot Long Time" (Danger Zone) is back just in time for the tail end of summer with a remix from **Niko**. The new and improved track features rapper **Flo Rida** and fellow Jamaicans **Jr. Reid** and **Mavado**. And speaking of Mavado, he follows up on the success of his gospel-influenced monster hit "The Rock" by going back to church for "Overcome," which interpolates the gospel hymn "We Shall Overcome."

On the decidedly non-gospel end of things is "Naw Wear None" by **Ce'Cile** and **Lady Saw**, on the Self Defense riddim,

an ode to going commando in the club. The riddim also hosts "Sweep," a new dance song from Elephant Man (not to be confused with Voicemail's new tune of the same name and about the same dance, on a one-off produced by **Daseca**), and "Robbery," an excellent example of shit-talking courtesy of **Macka Diamond**, who playfully caps on everyone from Jr. Reid, Elephant, Mavado, **Bounty Killer**, **Beenie Man**, **Wayne Marshall**, **Busy Signal**, **Serani**, the **Marleys**, and more.

On the one-drop side of things, be sure to check out the new Binghi riddim (M), filled with conscious offerings from **Lutan Fyah**, **Mykal Rose**, **Sugar Minott**, **Flourgon**, and a surprise combination from **Gregory Isaacs** and **Big Star**. And, since this is an election year, it seems fitting that there's a new riddim called Politics (Birchill) with beautiful tracks from **Gyptian**, **Chuck Fenda**, **Morgan Heritage**, **Da'Ville**, and a rare appearance by **Vybz Kartel** (alongside **D Major**) on a conscious riddim.

And because you can't make beef patties without, well, beef, I'm happy to report that Bounty Killer has found himself a new party to war with. This time, it's the **Monster Shack** (a.k.a. **Monster Empire's General B**, **Ghost**, and **Roundhead**) who are taking shots at the Warlord. "Mr. Tek It Back" contains samples of Bounty's catchphrases and the line, "How di fuck you come a war with only eight line?" But General B adds little to the track, whereas Ghost (for a few years, I was sure he was a female artist) ruins the song. In short, it would appear that, unlike Bounty, the Monster Shack is not built for this.

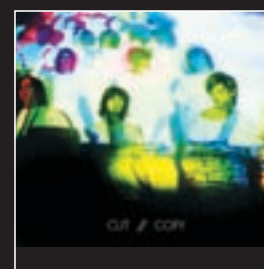
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Lucky 13

By Toph One

TophOne spins weekly at the RedWine Social, White Label, Saints & Sinners, and Funkside in San Francisco.



HEAVY PETTING CREW



DAD, LITTLE TOPH, AND MOM IN S.F.

In honor of my Mom's big **th birthday (a true lady never divulges her age), this month I'll review these releases with a bit of Carol Kerpan Evans' unique Croatian-Catholic-Democrat flair. Not that she can be found listening to much of this stuff outside of when she's entertaining her many surrogate sons and daughters at the RedWine Social. But I owe all my weirdness and lust for life, as well as a sizable and eclectic musical collection, to this Chicago-area expat, and I thank her daily for every moment of my upbringing. All the rough times and dirt-poor years, the bike rides and train trips, the late-night rides home from jail or the hospital—Moms was always there. So listen up and have a drink of the grape with Mom. *Zivjeli* and Happy Birthday!

SCOTTY COATS & WES THE MESS "DOUBLE FISTED"

Rong/US/12
An aptly titled ode to their debauchorous weekly in L.A., this was a super-funky drum-break-and-hand-clapper that only came out in a limited pressing, but look out for remixes by Prins Thomas coming out on Rong/DFA. Mom has always loved a good party.

PPP "ON A CLOUD"

Ubiquity/US/12
Yeah, I could see Mom getting down in a little mod *Laugh-In* outfit in Hollywood back in '65. Insane backbeat soul from Waajeed and Saadiq with a *hot* remix by the Bay's own Trackademicks. Heavy Detroit funk with "Angel" on the flip. Can't wait for their full-length, *Abundance*, coming soon.

OPIO VULTURE'S WISDOM, VOLUME ONE

Hiero Imperium/US/CD
Mom's not a big rap fan, but if she can dance to it, she'll dig it, and producer The Architect makes it funky enough throughout Opio's second solo release. Plenty of wine references and the Hiero mastermind's trademark wordplay (check "I Need a Money Tree") make this a must.

MOPHONO "THE EDGE"

CB Records/US/7
Our man DJ Centipede (a.k.a. Mophono) slays it once again with a "skip-on-beat" 45 of funky-ass break edits. That's right kids, buy two copies for that rough boat-party set, 'cause wherever you drop the needle, you're on beat!

THE FUN YEARS BABY, IT'S COLD INSIDE

Barge/US/CD
As soon as I put this on, a thick milky fog enveloped my neighborhood and I felt an uncontrollable urge to curl up on the couch and nap. No joke: These cats wield that powerful and hypnotic vibe like a sword.

HEAVY PETTING CREW SONGS OUR PETS TAUGHT US

Bomb/US/CD
You cannot *not* love this record. With songs like the punky "I Love Goats" or the electro hip-hop of "Funky Bunnies (Remix)," this hot and mysterious trio (including a real-life vet technician!) sings about the animals they love in a fun and delightful manner of styles. My mom still sends me birthday cards from pet turtles and chickens that have been dead almost 30 years, so you know we love our critters too.

ARABIAN PRINCE INNOVATIVE LIFE: THE ANTHOLOGY (84-89)

Stones Throw/US/CD
Buy it for the ground-breaking and still very rockable sounds. Buy it for the 20-page booklet on West Coast hip-hop.

TREASURE FINGERS "CROSS THE DANCEFLOOR"

Fools Gold/US/2x12
Stupid-funky debut from this Atlanta producer, with remixes from Laidback Luke, Curses, and Lifelike. Mom's no stranger to the dancefloor, either.

ENVELOPE SHARK BOLT

Weightless/US/CD
Mom always taught me, don't judge a book by its cover, and it's a damn good thing, too, because if I did this CD might be filed under '80s SoCal thrash metal. In reality, it's a fine slice of Columbus, OH hip-hop, expertly produced by label honcho Blueprint. Gotta love that Midwest flavor!

AIN'T NO DISCO "TOUCH THE GROUND"

unreleased/US
This would be the latest from veteran Bay Area heavyweights Felix the Dog and Buna, and it is burning hot. Hardcore dancefloor bass all the way—this one's actually for Otto, RIP.

MUNK "LIVE FAST! DIE OLD! (REMIXES PART 2)"

Gomma/GER/12
Hot mutant disco from the studios of Ed Banger, WhoMadeWho, and Rio's Amazing Clay. Smart money is on the Amazing Clay mix getting Carol's vote.

LIZZIE PARKS "RAISE THE ROOF"

Tru Thoughts/UK/7
Stunning soul vocals with music by the Nostalgia 77 band from a label that can do no wrong in my book. Vintage sounds for Mom to groove to.

LUCKY 13 KRANKED 7 THE CACKLE FACTOR

Radical Films/US/DVD
As *Mash* and *Pedal* have done for urban bicycling, the *Kranked* series has documented the furthest extremes in MTB and downhill riding. From streets and terrain parks to the farthest outback, the Radical crew captures the best of the best. I gotta show this to Mom so she can see the kind of hell I could be wreaking on a bike.

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...Sophisticated and complex, far more than your average window dressing, and as an opening shot, the EP this is drawn from is quite a statement. I can't wait to hear the LP. 4 of 5 stars. #10 Track of 2006. — Joe Tangari, *PITCHFORK*



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... "might just knock your Converse low-tops clean off." — *SPIN*

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IN THE STUDIO: THE FAINT

OMAHA'S SECOND-GEN NEW WAVE PAVE THEIR OWN DIY PRODUCTION DESTINY.

WORDS: FRED MIKETA PHOTO: BILL SITZMAN

Nearly a decade ago, Omaha, Nebraska-based electro-rock outfit The Faint popularized the white-belt-and-black-bangs aesthetic, but possibly even more noteworthy, they reintroduced the synthesizer into the jaded punk-by-way-of-indie-rock subculture. Perhaps single-handedly inspiring the term “dance punk,” The Faint hit the synths harder than Gary Numan in his prime, all while keeping time with their gritty, guitar-wielding Saddle Creek contemporaries. Their albums—*Blank-Wave Arcade*, *Danse Macabre*, and *Wet From Birth*—saw the band shapeshifting from Kraftwerkian robot rockers to second-generation New Wave purveyors in just a few short years.

So what does a group of ex-skateboarding indie kids do when they go from punk rags to pop riches? Buy a studio, for starters. The group opted to honor their punk heritage by producing *Fascination* (their first record in over four years) themselves at their own Enamel Studio, doing all of the artwork themselves, and splitting from indie Saddle Creek to self-release the album via their own Blank.Wav imprint. *XLR8R* caught up with synth player/production captain Joel Petersen and singer Todd Fink to talk synths, side-projects, and moving up the DIY production foodchain.

XLR8R: HOW HAS YOUR RECORDING CHANGED NOW THAT YOU HAVE YOUR OWN STUDIO?

Joel Petersen: When we recorded *Blank-Wave Arcade*, we recorded nothing direct—all keys went through amps. Usually we used some crappy Peavy bass amp or something, but that's what we were working with at the time, what we were used to, and the way we wanted to sound. We were playing a lot of basement shows and we wanted to capture that spirit. With *Fascination*, we decided to do everything direct and as mixing started happening, rather than reaching for an EQ knob, we added in those growling, biting synths through amps. It adds that punkness, keeps things from sounding cold and sterile, and puts a little bit of room (and *human*) back into the recording process.

WHAT NEW PRODUCTION RESOURCES MAKE FASCINATION PARTICULARLY MEMORABLE?

JP: Our studio itself shaped everything we did. It's comprised of all kinds of gear and instruments, but we treat it as one big thing. It's in a building we own in downtown Omaha. Whether it's the different isolation rooms or one piece of gear, it's really about us using this studio to make new songs. It feels different because it's ours. I don't know if it's the paint or whatever but we love it. This band has, in one way or another, become our lives and our studio is really an extension of that.

HOW IMPORTANT HAVE VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL EFFECTS BEEN IN RECORDING?

Todd Fink: For this record, we fucked around with Melodyne software a lot with vocals. It's like an AutoTune program. You can put any kind of track into it, transpose the octaves, harmonize them, and make anything sound like a new instrument or gender. We used it on a subtle level with bass, but when something wasn't working right, we'd be like, “Let's just put it through this thing.” It's most visible on the slow song “Fish in the Womb”; you can hear the vocals getting dragged around and skewed. Like any other studio, sometimes you may have an idea that seems completely unreasonable, but those can be the most important to try. [It's about] running one thing into another thing and hoping for the time when it's like, “Whoa, what the fuck is that sound?”

WHAT ROLE DO VINTAGE SYNTHS PLAY IN YOUR STUDIO?

JP: It always depends on what we're going for. Our thought process typically starts like this: Hopefully we can work with vintage keys, then it goes to modern analog synths, and plug-ins are generally a last resort. With some vintage stuff, you can't do the tight-themed LFO tricks you can do with a modern keyboard. Everything has a time and a place and when it works it works. The one piece of gear I return to more often than not is the Doepfer A-100 Analog Modular synth... which I usually use for an effects device rather than a synthesizer.

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERRED SOFTWARE? DO YOU USE ANY DIFFERENT PLATFORMS FOR REMIXES?

TP: We used Pro Tools to record most of the album, but we love Ableton Live and would like to use it more. Individually we all love remixing and as a band we've done them for Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Nine Inch Nails. Right now, we're talking about doing a Kills remix. Jacob [Thiele] and I are starting a remix group called Depressed Buttons—we've kind of got a name now from DJing after Faint shows. Clark [Baechle] does remixes as Recordist, Joel does Broken Spindles, and Dapose does Werewolf Grave, which sounds like Aphex Twin and Cephalic Carnage!

The Faint's *Fascination* is out now on Blank.Wav.
thefaint.com



IN THE FAINT'S STUDIO, ABLETON LIVE, DOEPFER A-100 SYNTHESIZER, AND PRO TOOLS.



PHOTO JANA WINDEREN

ARTIST TIPS PHILIP JECK

If you believe that “turntablism” is just a sexed-up word for DJs scratching records over clichéd breakbeats, consider Philip Jeck. The British artist revives entombed moments from forgotten records and makes them surrealistic and ghostly under his touch. He prefers the natural decay of lo-fi turntables (employing 180 of them for his *Vinyl Requiem* performance), and from there he loops rich drones, disembodied vocals, and chords that arise like blown dust. His recent album, *Sand (Touch)*, continues what he does best. Here, Jeck gives us a few tips on sampling and looping vinyl sounds. *Cameron Macdonald*

KEEP IT SIMPLE

The methods I use are not that important to me in the making of the sound, but they are the simplest I have found. My biggest tip would be listen to what you are doing rather than looking, take away as much as you can, and still leave something interesting and/or emotionally engaging.

USE TAPE TO FORM YOUR LOOPS

I put a little sticker on each record to make the stylus stay in one groove. (A tip from turntablist Christian Marclay.) I use a guitar delay pedal that will make loops of different lengths that can be added to without losing the original loop.

EXPERIMENT WITH SPEED

I have a large collection of old turntables from the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, which were originally collected for Vinyl Requiem. The ones I use for concerts are the two smallest and lightest I have (to cut down on weight and excess baggage charges). They have four speeds (16/33/45/78 rpm). I like to use the 16 rpm a lot. At that speed, the sound becomes its grainiest. These old players also distort the sounds in their own way and are not too reliable as far as speeds go, so they bring variations into the sound all the time. The records I use are of every different genre, and have on the whole been thrown (or given) away by someone.

SAMPLE CREATIVELY

The Casio SK-1 keyboard, which is a simple lo-fi sampler—and is, unfortunately, not manufactured anymore—is what I use to make samples. I sample as I play, choosing which record to sample through the auxiliary outs on my mixer (which is a Behringer and has built-in effects, though I only use a handful of them). I love the sound of the SK-1. It always seems to distort in wonderful ways and it’s always a one-off, as you can’t save the sample.

IMPOSE LIMITS ON YOURSELF

In my playing, my intent is to find something that excites and moves me in some way. Then I try to expand it or reduce it to make a larger or more refined statement. I recommend limiting oneself (i.e. turn something off; do everything with one hand). Any limitation can take you somewhere you might not have gone otherwise. Also, when something comes into your mind to do, stop and wait for the next idea/action. In the end, the most important thing is the sound; all focus should be on that.

philipjeck.com



PRODUCTION UNLIMITED

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KEEPING PACE

TONIUM PACEMAKER POCKET-SIZED DJ SYSTEM

Tonium's Pacemaker makes big promises: essentially, it allows you to properly mix (i.e. beat-match) a set of songs the way you would on a pair of turntables, on a device the size of a PSP. Things start off strong: Making your way through the Pacemaker's packaging is a nearly euphoric un-boxing experience. Everything is flawlessly arranged and exquisitely styled—like a high-end Apple product, filtered through the sensibilities of a Scandinavian design firm.

The same superb physical qualities make their way to the device itself. This thing is on some Sriracha hotness, from its clean display to its uncluttered work surface. The buttons feel good, the integrated crossfader and multifunction touchpad react well, and the clean lines and matte finish are super-slick. And it's more than capable: The unit handles multi-channel audio along with layers of EQ and DSP (reverb, flange, etc.) effects with ease.

Unfortunately, this deftness of approach doesn't quite hold up when it comes to the Pacemaker's interface. The concept seems excellent—an all-in-one

portable turntable and mixer, small enough to hold in your hands, yet well endowed enough to hold a cubic ton of songs (read: 120 GB hard drive). But it just feels like a bit too much is lost in the miniaturization. Unlike a DJ setup, the Pacemaker makes it impossible to modify two or more controls simultaneously, and the pitch-only speed adjustment (no physical control of the sound files) makes things even less decks-like.

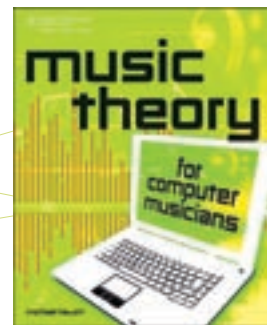
The prospect of a super-portable DJ setup—whether for putting together beat-matched mixes on the bus or actually playing impromptu gigs when a full setup isn't available—is a compelling one. And as is, the Pacemaker is the best thing going; whether road-tripping or just tripping, it's the most portable way to keep things on beat. We can imagine the next iteration—with two fully visual touchscreen mini-turntables—being ridiculously awesome. As is, though, the interface is perhaps a bit too unwieldy to justify the \$800-plus asking price. *Evan Shamoan*

MSRP: \$875; tonium.com



EAST WEST SAMPLES QUANTUM LEAP SD2 PLUG-IN

An overhaul of the original Stormdrum cinematic sample library, SD2 offers up 13 gigs of hyperbolic, earth-shattering summer-blockbuster drum kits, multitudes of ethnic percussion samples (both tuned and otherwise), savage metallic snares, thunderous toms... pretty much **everything you'll need to score your next apocalyptic Orc battle**. SD2 also includes 100-plus score-oriented, tempo-shiftable MIDI performances that you can remix to your heart's content. Producers take note: These samples are unmistakably Hollywood/videogame, and the library may not be particularly useful outside of those genres. Unless, of course, you've been sitting on your hands waiting for someone to build and sample the largest floor tom on earth—a sweet-ass 42x42 incher. *Roger Thomasson* **MSRP: \$495; eastwestsamples.com**



MUSIC THEORY FOR COMPUTER MUSICIANS TUTORIAL GUIDE

From the fundamentals of sound to exotic-sounding Eastern scales to basic piano skills to complex harmony to polyrhythms, *Music Theory for Computer Musicians* dips a big toe into just about every one of the vast oceans that together form western music theory. And, as a relatively broad overview of the field, it succeeds. The problem is, with only 300 or so pages, much of the subject matter provided here will be difficult for a beginner to internalize. We do admire author Michael Hewitt's attempts at fusing traditional concepts with the 21st-century technologies and conventions available to the computer musician. At least initially, though, **we strongly recommend that music theory virgins put the horse well before the cart** and work through a dedicated basic theory book. *Roger Thomasson* **MSRP: \$34.99; cengage.com**

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HERCULES DJ CONSOLE RMX

For the few digital DJs that haven't "gone Serato" and aren't satisfied with the current virtual music-controller crop, a new strong man has entered the mix. The Hercules DJ Console RMX control surface is a sturdy and beautifully designed unit for DJs who like to twist knobs and scratch madly. Packaged with the reliable and UI-friendly Virtual DJ software, the USB-powered RMX unit is roughly the size of a MacBook Pro (35 cm across), with push-button effects like flanger, beat looping, and pitch-bend built into its solid metal casing. The three volume and dual-pitch faders are durable and smooth, and the two jog wheels have excellent response time, plus RMX can be used as a MIDI controller with other software applications. With a mic input and four RCA I/Os, it's easy to attach additional devices. Logically designed with quality features, *Hercules DJ RMX flexes some serious muscle.*

Tomas Palermo MSRP: \$459; hercules.com



CYCLING '74 MAX/MSP/JITTER 5 PROGRAMMING SOFTWARE

For those not in the know, MAX/MSP/JITTER is a graphical, object-driven programming environment that has long been considered the *de facto* standard for developing interactive and performance-based audio and video projects. If you need a primer, I suggest Wikipedia—we've only got 100 words here, and believe me, MAX patches ain't no Acid loops. Version 5 represents a major overhaul, and includes a sexy new scalable GUI, an Ableton-esque drag-and-drop file browser, improved dynamic debugging features, comprehensive search capabilities, multi-core support, contextual paste, aspect-ratio resizing, and wait for it... fully-integrated documentation! So, the long and short? MAX/MSP/JITTER 5 is *more powerful and accessible than ever.* *Roger Thomasson MSRP: \$699; cycling74.com*



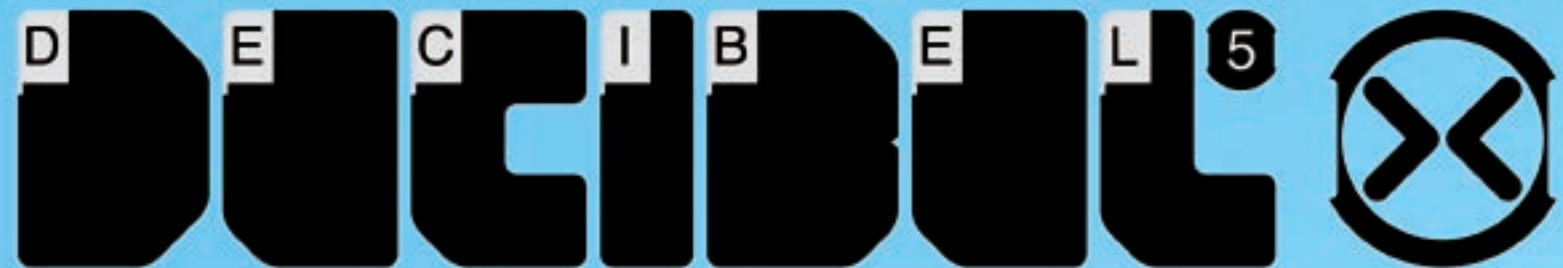
AERIELLE I2I STREAM DIGITAL MUSIC BROADCASTER

Wireless audio has a deservedly bad rep, but Aerielle might be on to something with the i2i Stream. These interchangeable little transmitter/receiver devices ride the 2.4 GHz band (sorry, cordless phone!) and stream audio from any 3.5 mm headphone jack to one or more i2i units nearby. Plug in your own headphones, punch the "channel" button to the appropriately festive color, and voila: tunes flying through the air. Of course, you could just plug in some speakers into your iPod, but these lightweight, compact, USB-chargeable doodads *banish wires while feeding remarkably good-quality audio to every headset in your listening party.* *Rob Geary MSRP: \$119.95; i2igear.com*

PROPELLERHEAD REASON ELECTRIC BASS REFILL PLUG-IN

Looking for low end without high investment? With the company's proven eye for hyper-sampled detail, Propellerhead has gone *deeeeeeep* to provide Reason users with eight highly expressive, keyboard-mapped electric-bass rigs. And the results can be phonky or fried, depending on taste and selection of amp/mic/effect patches. Featuring a Fender Jazz Bass, Fender Precision Bass, Gibson EB-0, Rickenbacker 4001, and MusicMan Stingray Fretless, among other vintage models, this ReFill adapts to your signal chain, whether your style runs toward the JBs, Motörhead, or Sonic Youth, prog rock, Afrobeat, or dance-punk. Glissando, besides being fun to say, sounds good. No, there's not the same tactile thrill as fondling the frets or slithering fingers along the neck. But it still helps to think two-handedly for applying ghost notes, bends, fret noise, and modulation-wheel-note dampening. *Keeping this ReFill in your rack helps keep you in the pocket.* *Tony Ware MSRP: \$129; propellerheads.se*

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- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Carl Craig (US) - DJ
 Deadmau5 (CA) - Live
 Jahcoozi (DE) - Live
 The Bug feat. Warrior Queen (UK) - Live
 Flying Lotus (US) - Live
 Dixon (DE) - DJ
 Burnt Friedman (DE) - Live
 Audion (US) - Live
 Glitch Mob (US) - Live
 Luca Bacchetti (IT) - DJ
 Tujiko Noriko (JP) - Live
 Barbara Morgenstern (DE) - Live
 Santiago & Bushido (US) - Live
 William Basinski (US) - Live
 Deaf Center (NO) - Live
 Jeff Samuel (US/DE) - DJ
 KiloWatts (US) - Live
 Tycho (US) - Live
 Noah Pred (CA) - Live
 Fax (MX) - Live
 Mike Monday (UK) - DJ
 Alland Byallo (US) - DJ
 Derek Plaslaiko (US) - DJ</p> | <p>Eluvium (US) - Live
 Akira Rabelais (US) - Live
 Balún (US / PR) - Live
 Eskmo (US) - Live
 Library Tapes (SE) - Live
 Welder (US) - Live
 Lusine (US) - Live
 Let's Go Outside (US) - Live
 Jeff Greinke (US) - Live
 Deru (US) - Live
 Cubenx (MX) : Live
 Craig Kuna (US) - DJ
 Bryan Zentz (US) - DJ
 Jerry Abstract (US) - DJ
 Carole Kim (US) - Visual
 Phidelity (US) - Live
 offthesky (US) - Visual
 Nikola Baytala (US) - DJ
 Jacob London (US) - Live
 Truckasauras (US) - Live
 Taimur Agha (US) - DJ
 Nalepa (US) - Live
 Michael Manahan (US) - DJ</p> | <p>Les Freres Courvoisier (US) - Live
 Attentat (US) - DJ
 m.0 (US) - Live
 The Sight Below (US) - Live
 SunTzu Sound (US) - DJ
 Struggle (US) - DJ
 Tracer Visuals (US) - Visual
 Sammy D (US) - DJ
 Kris Moon (US) - Live
 Kadeejah Streets (US) - DJ
 J-Sun (US) - DJ
 Ctrl_Alt_Dlt (US) - DJ
 Crazy Larry (US) - DJ
 Alala.One (US) - DJ
 Panty Control (US) - DJ
 Son of Rose (US) - Live
 Rob Noble (US) - DJ
 Punch Drunk Productions (US) - Visual
 Nordic Soul (US) - DJ
 novaTRON (US) - Live
 KillingFrenzy (US) - Visual
 31avas (US) - DJ
 + more to be announced</p> |
|---|---|--|

mobile planet

Kiss your computers and consoles goodbye. "Jesus Phone" gaming has arrived.

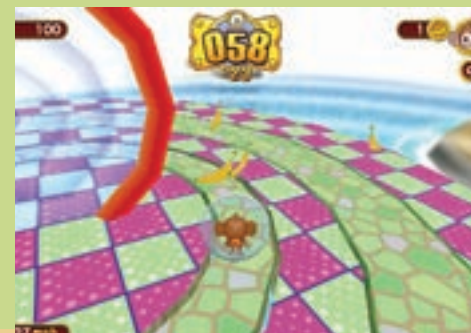


With Apple launching a cheaper, faster, and better iPhone in July, along with quick, easy, and—most importantly—legal development software for the platform, many are touting the "Jesus Phone" as the next great portable gaming machine. XLR8R takes a look at the best bets for the little giant.

words Ryan Rayhill

Cro-Mag Rally (Pangea)

While rumors of various kart-racing games for the iPhone swirl around (*Crash Nitro Kart* chief among them), *Cro-Mag Rally* remains the forerunner in mini-motor vehicle racing for the platform. As two caveman brothers, you use all manner of prehistoric tech to race through the epochs of time using the iPhone's built-in tilt-measuring accelerometer to steer.



Super Monkey Ball (Sega)

Released for the GameCube nearly seven years ago, *Super Monkey Ball* sees a surprising (yet natural) rebirth on Apple's machine. The tilt-sensitive iPhone lends itself perfectly to the cheeky simian-rolling, banana-collecting mechanics that have made the game a hit for so long.



Peggle (PopCap Games)

Among the most popular games already available on various platforms is *Peggle*. The 2D strategic puzzler has universally been praised as one of the most addictive games since *Tetris*, and the inclusion of *Peggle* into the iPhone library will ensure a loyal fanbase ready for more colored-peg-on-ball action.



Spore (EA)

By far one of the most anticipated games of the year for PC and Mac owners, *Spore* is likely the iPhone's best chance at mainstream gaming acceptance. The creature-building, evolution-emulating title by *Sims* creator Will Wright looks to break down the barrier between technology and God in the most innovative way since stem-cell research.

no-mac jack

No iPhone? You can still get these awesome games for any handset.



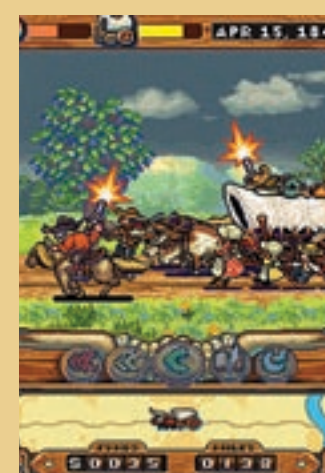
Puzzle Quest: Challenge of the Warlords (THQ)

Mixing elements of puzzle games and classic RPGs, *Puzzle Quest* has become known as a game that both the hardcore and the casual fan can get into with simple gameplay and attractive visuals.



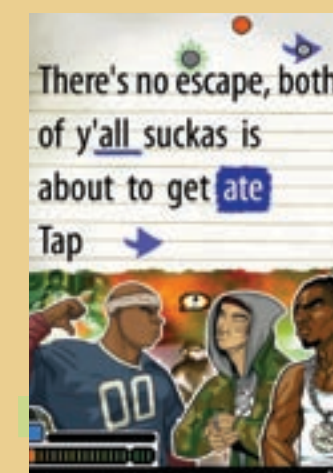
Diner Dash 2: Restaurant Rescue (PlayFirst)

Among the most popular mobile titles, *Diner Dash 2: Restaurant Rescue* is essentially a strategy title that involves the successful operation of a restaurant, from seating customers to delivering orders, all for the purposes of saving a suffering diner from the landlord's bulldozer. Mel's Diner meets *Electric Boogaloo*?



Oregon Trail (Gameloft)

As one of the few videogames you were actually allowed to play in school back in the day, *Oregon Trail*, the learning game that had you travelling by wagon to Oregon in the 1800s, left quite an impression on many children of the 1980s. This mobile version keeps the themes and updates the graphics for a mobile audience. Dying of cholera still sucks.



Battle Rapper (Longtail Studios)

Like *Guitar Hero* for the hip-hop set, *Battle Rapper* uses rhythm-based controls to tell the story of a fallen superstar who tries to make his way back to the top. One of the best ways to keep it semi-real while on the subway.

words Ryan Rayhill



loading...

XLR8R picks the hottest videogames and gear of the month.



What a wild summer for geek-tastic blockbusters, eh? A bad-ass *Iron Man*, a not-totally-stinky *Hulk*, a wikkid *Hellboy*, a mind-blowing *Batman*... and uh, a new *Star Wars*...kinda. Christ, come on, Lucas! Just stop! But alas, now it is time for fall movies to bore us into Oscar season. And that's where the gaming industry comes in, to wash away our post-summer malaise with a deluge of hotness.

Speaking of *Star Wars* overkill, this month sees the release of *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed* (LucasArts; Xbox 360, PS3, PS2, Wii), which picks up where *Star Wars: Episode III* left off, letting you play as Darth Vader's secret apprentice, who's bent on destroying the remaining Jedi throughout the galaxy. Despite starting off as a bad apple, depending on your course of action you can redeem yourself and take on the Master of Evil himself, Hayden Christensen! Interestingly, the game reveals some heretofore unknown elements of *Star Wars* lore, but perhaps most impressive is the game's physics engine, which allows players to control the Force like never before and literally toss everything and everyone from here to Ord Mantell! (Wookieepedia that shit.)

Like *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* before it, the *Batman* universe finally gets the block-o treatment this month in *LEGO Batman: The*

Video Game (Warner Bros., Xbox 360, PS3, Wii, DS). As Batman and/or Robin you fight in a be-bricked Gotham against a bevy of Arkham alums, but as with all LEGO games, all the characters, from the Joker to Commissioner Gordon, are playable and each have their own strengths. While *Dark Knight*-caliber storytelling this ain't, it is a hell of a lot of fun.

Forget over-protective parents and religious nuts: When Hugo Chavez hates your game, you know you're onto something. *Mercenaries 2: World in Flames* (EA; Xbox 360, PS3) follows the further adventures of a group of hired guns as they attempt to overthrow an unscrupulous Venezuelan dictator with a thirst for oil. But real-world insinuations aside, a game that allows for virtually everything in sight to be hijacked, set ablaze, or otherwise obliterated can't be all that bad, can it?

Infinite Undiscovery (Square Enix; Xbox 360) is perhaps one of the most accurately named RPGs to date, as pretty much anything you do in the game will uncover various possibilities that in turn uncover various possibilities. If fear of the unknown is crippling for you, rest easy, as there is still plenty of the fine RPG-ery you've come to expect from the house that *Final Fantasy* built.

Among the few games that have actually been able to scare the living crap out people

over the years, the *Silent Hill* series has always been at the top of the bloody, corpse-laden heap. The sixth game in the series, *Silent Hill: Homecoming* (Konami; Xbox 360, PS3)—which sees your war-vet character returning from overseas to battle zombie nurses, boil-covered cadavers, and a split-headed creep named Schism while your mother lays catatonic—is no exception. Mind-bendingly frightening.

Finally, for fans of pretending to play other people's music comes this month's biggest release, *Rock Band 2* (EA/MTV; Xbox 360). Featuring tracks from the likes of Billy Idol, Guns N' Roses, Bob Dylan, and The Replacements, *Rock Band 2* also delivers "more realistic" guitars (a Sunburst Fender Strat this time around) and a drum kit that doesn't make more racket than the song you are trying to play. Also, any downloaded content you may have from *Rock Band 1* can be imported into *2* and vice versa, making it one of the first sequels to be backward-compatible with the original. Whatever dudes, just bring on "Alex Chilton"!

1. *STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED*
2. *ROCK BAND 2*
3. *SILENT HILL: HOMECOMING*
4. *MERCENARIES 2: WORLD IN FLAMES*

 Catch the weekly Loading... column at XLR8R.com/news.



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VIS-ED

Andrew Jeffrey Wright

Corduroy, Robert Crumb, and the weird, wild obsessions of Space 1026's funniest founder.

[left](#)
Andrew Jeffrey Wright
exclusive for
XLR8R 2008

The only thing that cheered us up last year was Andrew Jeffrey Wright's *Labs With Abs 2007*, a hand-screenprinted wall calendar featuring comic book-style drawings of incredibly buff dogs getting wild in the streets with their six-packs (of abs, that is). Then we saw a drawing he did of a marijuana leaf wearing a bikini.

Finally, our friend turned up at the office wearing a mind-blowing t-shirt he designed for Juiceboxxx (featuring Pacman about to eat Q-Bert's ass) and we knew we had to ask him to be part of Vis-Ed.

When I call Andrew Jeffrey Wright on his house phone—he doesn't have a cell phone (or a bank account, for that matter)—he's in the middle of drawing, with Herbie Hancock's "Rockit" blasting in the background. This is what Wright, a 37-year-old Illadelphian with a taste for the absurd, does every day, with breaks to flip over the *Life is Too Short* cassette or procure a fresh-squeezed juice (he's on the pH Miracle diet).

AJW is probably best known as one of the founders—along with Ben Woodward, Adam Wallacavage, and a host of others—of Space 1026. The communal art space has put Philly on the underground art map while offering affordable studio space, gallery shows, and even an in-house store to its over 40 artists-in-residence. But who are we kidding? It's really legendary for its shows and parties, which have included installations from Fort Thunder, puppet uprisings, a food show featuring dishes like "mock smurf" and "mock unicorn," and a yearly prom, where AJW—who has DJed around town for seven years—played records such as Josh Wink's "Higher State of Consciousness."

Wright, who grew up in the Philadelphia suburb of Ridley Township, has done a lot of other things, too. He has a degree in animation, and shamelessly exploited the RISD facilities while screenprinting for Shepard



above:
Excerpts from
AJW's sketchbook

Fairey in Providence in the mid-'90s. He was a backup dancer for MC Paul Barman. He's worked on immensely cool videos with Clare Rojas and Paper Rad, music videos for Thom Lessner's party-rap band Sweatheart, album covers for Plastic Little, buttons for Pink Skull and Amanda Blank, and t-shirts for Toy Machine, Obey, and Poketo.

With a show this month at San Francisco's Luggage Store Gallery, and another soon at London, Ontario's Community Outreach space, the time seemed ripe to talk to Wright about drug art, corduroys, and *Gumby*, the movie.

andrewjeffreywright.com, space1026.com

When did it occur to you that you could do art for a living?

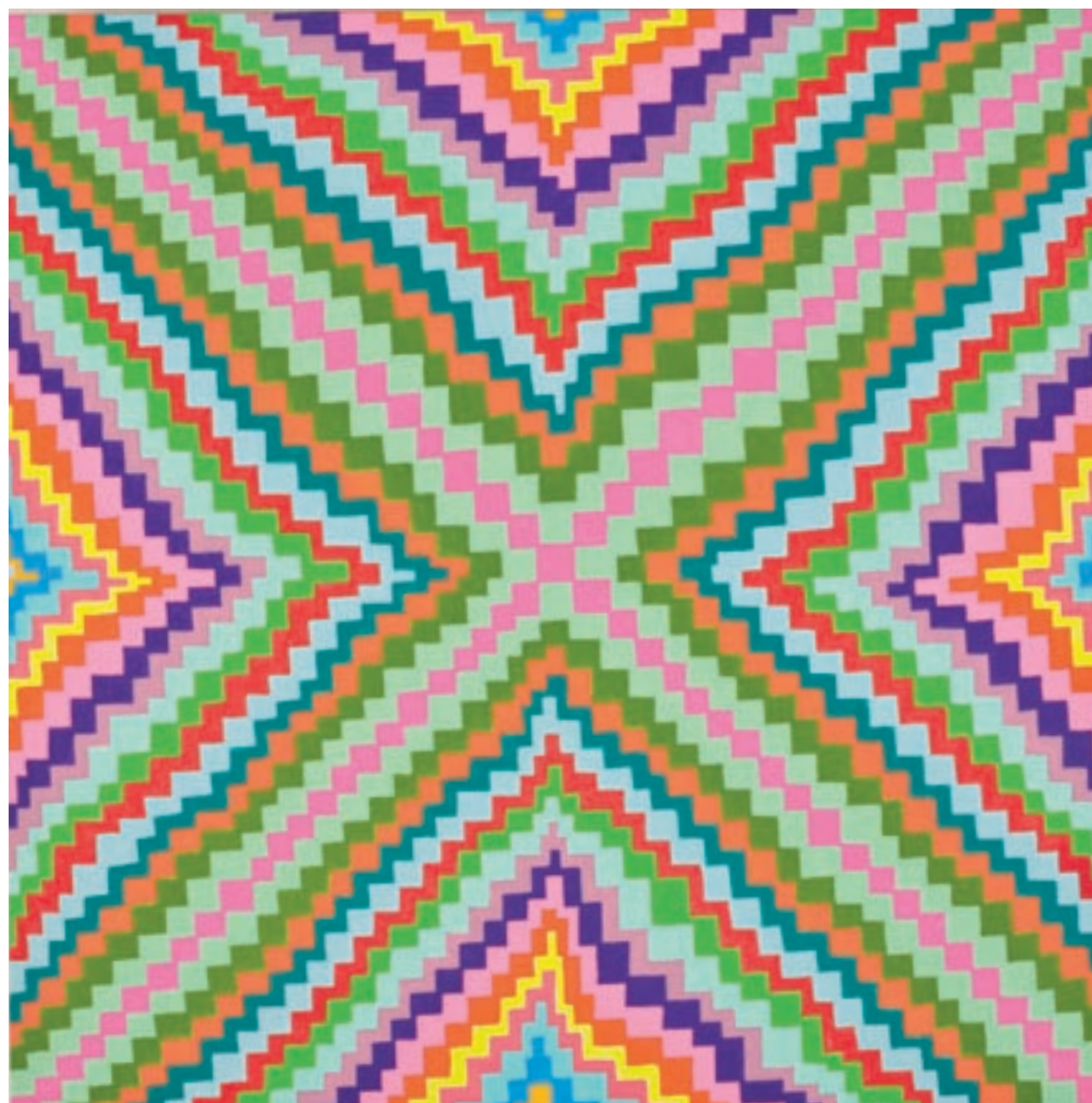
It was always kind of the goal to live off what you love to do... It's such a weird concept to be like, "I'm going to live off of drawing." [But] now it's a reality and it's a struggle but it's a lot of fun. It's kind of at the point where, to survive off of art, I'm not just selling drawings and paintings and screenprints and zines, I also have to design t-shirts for companies and record covers and do other types of freelance artwork—which is a lot better than being a security guard, but I just really want to create the little art world that I want to make. It's just really hard to get to that point, for me at least.

What are some of your favorite comics?

I never really liked action or superhero comics. For me it was always *Mad* magazine, *Richie Rich*, *Casper the Ghost*, *Little LuLu*, *Archie*. That's what I grew up with in the '70s. Then in the '80s I got my hands on Robert Crumb and Peter Bagge and JD King and all these adult comics that you had to be 18 to buy, but I was buying them at 14. I was a Christian then, too, and I know I have this one issue with Sharpie all through it—whenever they would take the Lord's name in vain I would cross it out.

I've never done drugs, but I've always loved drug art. I find it really interesting. I remember being at a county fair when I was little... I had to be no older than 10, no

above:
Assorted zine covers



above left
"X Wave #12"

above right
Show poster, and
skate deck for
Toy Machine

younger than seven. I was hanging out by myself, and I won all this stuff, so I bring it over to my parents like, "Look at all these iron-ons that I won!" My dad and mom were looking at 'em, and my dad was like, "Judy, he cannot keep these." And my mom was like, (*whispers*) "Bobby, he doesn't know what they mean." One of them was a cartoon owl smoking a really big joint and his eyes were dilated, another one was the Freak Brothers running from the cops smoking pot, another one was a really cute drawing of a beaver taking a bite out of a tree and it said, "Save a tree, eat a beaver." I didn't know what they meant; I just thought they were really cool drawings. My parents let me keep one—for some reason, it was the owl smoking the joint.

What kind of stuff were you into by the time you got into high school?

In freshman year [of high school], me and my skateboard friends were all on the wrestling team. I think I was the only one that lasted the full year, because I'm kind of stubborn. Whenever I would lose a match I would feel bad for letting the team down. And whenever I would win a match I would feel bad for the person I beat because I could see how frustrated and upset they were. It was a lose/lose situation. So I quit, and I was just skateboarding all the time throughout high school.

What is your favorite thing you once owned that you wish you still had? I've had glasses stolen, long boards, cars...

What's with you and getting things stolen?

I live in Philadelphia! I was never mugged but I've had apartments broken into. One year when we weren't living in our apartment for a whole summer, people were squatting in it. One time I was parked outside of Space 1026, which is a pretty good area nowadays. Someone breaks the window, pops the trunk, and—this was two years ago, so it's not like VHS was a big thing—the only thing I had in my trunk was the *Gumby* movie and somebody stole it. There's some crackhead running around trying to pawn the *Gumby* movie on VHS! But then I found it at a flea market again. It's a good movie. I recommend it.



Since being friends with Sweatheart have you gotten into spandex?

I don't wear spandex. I've been trying to get corduroys because our nation has a denim overdose. The only place that I can find corduroys is this spot in New York near the Giant Robot store. I got tipped off by [the artist] Ara Peterson. I don't want baggy ones. I try to get ones that are close to high-water, but nice straight leg, thin tread, not the thick tread of the '90s.

Would you say thrift stores and flea markets influence your art?

Yeah, they definitely do. A lot of my art and my sense of humor comes from hearing something wrong or seeing something wrong. That happens with a lot of old thrift-shop

videos that I get; I watch those for inspiration. I try not to be too retro or nostalgic with anything but I'm definitely influenced by past decades in things that I use.

In every photo of you, you're wearing one-inch badges. What buttons have you got on right now?

You caught me. I'm not wearing any right now. But I do have a little rotation shelf of buttons that I currently wear. Right now on the shelf I got More Money Less Problems, My Bloghole is Getting Sore, I Heart Toilets, and Repo Records, the record store where my girlfriend works. I wanted to make buttons for a while but then I got really inspired by Noah Lyon (a.k.a. Retard Riot). He's the king of buttons—his life is probably 90% buttons, whereas mine is about 10%.



What is your favorite Philly slang?

Jawn. Saying "jawn" is like when my great grandmother would say "whatchamacallit." It's for everything; just substitute it. I like "chumpy." When I used to work at Kentucky Fried Chicken outside of Philly, this kid Derek was showing me the ropes and it was just like, "Yeah, you grab this chumpy here and you throw it over here next to this chumpy."

TBC

The Handmade's Tale

Notes from the underground craft economy.

Words Ken Taylor
Photo Francesca Tamse



The scene at the Renegade Craft Fair in San Francisco belies its confrontational name: Combing through the isles at the Fort Mason pavilion, you see mostly females in their 20s and 30s hocking knitted, sewn, and kiln-fired wares of all types. Upon closer inspection, there is *something* slightly different about the items on offer, something much subtler than the “renegade” tag suggests. “It seems to be all about context,” says If’N Books’ Deb Dormandy, in a clip from the upcoming documentary *Handmade Nation*. “My [handmade] books wouldn’t sell that great next to batik silk scarves, but if there’s, like, a batik silk scarf with a skull on it next to [my booth], I sell much better.”

It’s likely a similar scene at the Austin Craft Mafia’s meetings, where there’s nary a pair of cement shoes to be found (ballet flats, maybe), but there’s still a definite distinction to be made with today’s new breed of crafter/maker. “I see the use of the oppositional aesthetic as a way

to distance the indie crafter from the more traditional craft scene,” explains Cortney Heimerl, *Handmade Nation*’s assistant producer and co-author of the forthcoming book of the same name. “‘Craft’ is such a problematic word. The young people that are involved in creating what people have come to refer as ‘the new wave of craft’ or ‘indie craft’ use very traditional methods—embroidery or pottery or knitting—but use very different themes and issues... They needed a way to separate one type of craft from another.”

Those themes and issues range from the aforementioned skulls to ones addressed by groups like Knitta, who take the “renegade” bit to heart. In the documentary, members of the Houston, TX-headquartered (but worldwide) collective are shown tagging buildings, lampposts, trees, and even stone scraps of the Great Wall of China with woolen cozies, transforming urban landscapes to rejuvenate their often drab steel-and-concrete aesthetics.

Though not all indie crafters are activists in the traditional sense, they do believe they’re shaping the way people shop, one stitch at a time. “It is a movement that is helping to change the face of consumerism,” offers Heimerl. (Which, as any quilter-provocateur will tell you, *is* political.) And that’s where the internet has come in: If you think the Long Tail theory provides a glimmer hope for the future of indie record sales, just think what it will do for punk macramé. What was once frowned upon as “women’s work” has grown into viable communities and self-made businesses, where buyers groups, online societies (sharing knitting- and small-business tips), real-life meet-ups, and direct sales have all flourished.

“Within the DIY community you will find trained academic artists, crafters who have day jobs and sew by night, full-time crafters who have left their day jobs behind, stay-at-home moms, and crafters who just make stuff for the sake

of creating,” says Faythe Levine, director of the *Handmade* doc and co-author of the book.

“The underlying message of DIY itself is ‘you can do it,’” says Levine, who draws parallels between indie filmmaking and crafting. “Work with what you have, pool your resources, tap into your community, and make it happen. That is exactly what I did. I turned making a film into my craft—same message as before, different medium. The documentary has become my platform to show it is possible to have an art community that is about supporting one another and sharing ideas, that craft is approachable and all-inclusive.”

So all-inclusive that no one stares down their noses at enthusiasts of Bedazzling and Puffy Painted Fruit of the Loom sweatshirts?

“Of course not,” Heimerl replies.

Handmade Nation (the book) is out later this year on Princeton Press. The documentary will be released in 2009. handmadenationmovie.com

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